

Armenian Proverbs

**A Paremiological Study
With an Anthology of 2,500 Armenian Folk Sayings
Selected and Translated Into English**

By Dora Sakayan
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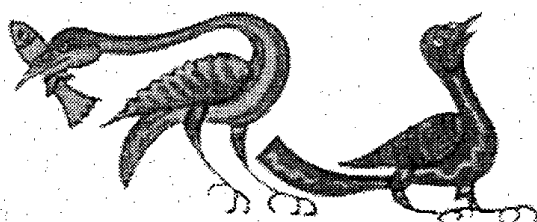
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To my daughters
Elisa and Lilith



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Any imperfections that remain are, of course, my own responsibility.

Introduction

Of all the genres of oral tradition, proverbs are among the most popular. Proverbs embody the wisdom of an entire linguistic community and the experience, the beliefs and superstitions of many generations. Because they originate from an anonymous, though authoritative source—the nation as a whole—they guide people's destinies as universal lessons of life, commandments, maxims, and advice.

In their spirit, proverbs cross all national boundaries; in their form, they capture the essence of a people both as part of the human family and as a collective "individual," as it were. Despite the enormous volume of literature on proverbs in general (anthologies, collections, dictionaries, monographs, etc.), Armenian proverbs have yet to receive their full share of attention on an international level.¹ The Armenian proverb has played a unique role in the preservation of Armenian culture. Yet this unique reflection of a distinctive worldview has hardly broken out of its own community. It is imperative that this enormous fund of ethnographic material be made available to other peoples.

It is not an easy task to write an introduction to a book of this sort, not because the subject cannot speak for itself—it can, with the eloquence of the thousands of years that go into the making of a nation's culture and that elusive quality of "the people." What I would like to convey, apart from my own admiration for the tenacity and creativity of my fellow Armenians, is something of the fascination that others can find in this storehouse of folk wisdom—whether my readers be ethnographers, anthropologists or folklorists, children of the Diaspora, the nostalgic expatriate or the curious student of culture. Naturally, I shall draw on my own background in linguistics, and I beg indulgence for sections which may be too technical for some readers. I will attempt, however, not to lose sight of the broader, cultural aspects of the subject. As for the literary appeal of Armenian

proverbs, the translation will aim to deliver as much as is humanly possible of their pithiness, punch, and poetry. The reader is invited to browse through this treasury of verbal folklore and to draw parallels with more modern notions governing our lives. The aim of this work is to show the vast potential of the Armenian proverb as a field of study. While I cannot claim to have covered the subject exhaustively, I have been able to indulge in a freer empirical exploration of its many avenues. This I hope will attract a broader readership than a more conventional treatment geared to the specialist, for the fact remains that even the most ambitious modern scholar cannot improve upon ancient wisdom.

Proverbs must exhibit certain features which make them instantly recognizable as such. Their distinct character as a genre—their wording, content, structure, and the many practical uses to which they may be put—has long fascinated the layman and the scholar, hence the rich literature of paremiology.² As part of the linguistic heritage of any native speaker, proverbs lend themselves easily to definition. As Mieder (1993:19 cf.) elaborates, some folk definitions are captured in proverbial expressions themselves. There is no final or comprehensive definition for proverbs; since they embrace all facets of human experience, scholars have approached and defined them from many different standpoints. According to Seiler, for instance, proverbs are “popular self-contained sayings of a didactic bent and elevated form” (1922:2).³ In Norrick, we find an overview of traditional definitions of proverbs. Briefly, proverbs are potential conversational turns; they are spoken and traditional; they have a fixed form and didactic tendency; they are general, figurative, prosodic and humorous. Most proverbs are built upon a number of formulas which are unique to a particular language (Norrick 1985:31-74).

Proverbs are especially well known for their conciseness, for their capacity to function as full statements expressed in just a few words. In the light of text linguistics, proverbs are seen as “micro-texts” (Fleischer 1982:80). They are considered to be among the most economical forms of traditional expression, a feature which makes them very popular devices for “fledgling orators” (Abrahams 1972:119). Brevity has been celebrated, appropriately enough, in

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proverbial form in many languages. Armenians, for instance, say:

Պարանի երկարն է լաւ, խօսքի՝ կարճը:
*The rope should be long, the words short.*⁴

The Armenian proverb displays all the features common to proverbs as a universal genre of oral tradition. Difficult as it is to choose, a few examples here will have to suffice.

What could be more concise than:

Անցուկը մոռցուկ է:
It's over, it's forgotten.

The didactic nature of the following proverb is unmistakable:

Մեծին պատուէ՛, որ մեծնաս:
Honor the elderly, to be honored yourself.

Many Armenian proverbs generalize:

Ամէն մարդ իր ցաւն ունի:
Everybody has his own pain.

Prosody also plays an important role:

Դուրսը քահանայ, ներսը՝ սատանայ:
Outside a priest, inside a beast.

Given their often witty style, Armenian proverbs can be favorite quotations in discourse. Consider the following humorous Armenian proverb:

Դդումի կերակուրն էլի ուտուում է, դդում գլուխն ի՞նչ է:
A cooked pumpkin you can at least eat, but what can you do with a pumpkin head?

[Armenian *դդում* *գլուխ* “pumpkin head” = English “blockhead”]

Compare also the Armenian equivalent of the English proverb “Too many cooks spoil the broth”:

Եօթը տէրտէր մի աղջիկ կնքեցին, անունը դրին Կիրակոս:
Seven priests baptized a girl and gave her the name Kirakos.
 [Kirakos is a male name.]

Many Armenian proverbs exhibit a healthy dose of cynicism and sarcasm. Note the proverb referring to the joy of recovering something lost, with the implication that the chances of receiving something new are extremely remote:

Աստուած աղքատը խնդացնել ուզէ նէ, էլը կորսնցնել, վերջն ալ գտնել կու տայ:
When God wants to make a poor man happy, he makes him lose his donkey and lets him find it again.

This proverb's stoic wit becomes more biting with the following addition:

էջն առանց թամբի ալ վերադառնայ՝ կ'ուրախանայ:
Even if his donkey returns without the saddle, he will still be happy.

Proverbs can supply an antidote to authority figures. Criticism is directed towards every level of authority:

God:

Աստուած հարստի կողմոց ա:
God takes the side of the rich.

The King:

Թագաւորը թախտէն ընկնի լաւ ա, քան տղէն օրոցքէն:
Better a King should fall from his throne, than a child from his cradle.

The Clergy:

Աստուած արու և էգ արար, վարդապետներին ո՞վ արար:
God created women and men, but who created those clergymen?

The Village Chief:

Գեղի ջոջը որ կամենայ, կաղ ու քոռ կը հարսնանայ:

If the village chief sets it on his mind, the lame will marry the blind.

The Boss:

Մեծաւորը որ կամուրջ լինի, վրայիցը մի' անցկենա:

Don't pass over the boss even if he is a bridge.

The resentment felt by disempowered subordinates comes through in the following:

Աղէն բարկանայ, աղէն զիս կը ծեծէ. ես բարկանամ, աղէն զիս կը ծեծէ:

When the boss gets angry, he beats me up; when I get angry, the boss beats me up.

As in other forms of oral folklore, Armenian proverbs do not mince words; they are blunt, like the following proverb describing women's ingenuity when it comes to outwitting their husbands:

Կնիկն որ մարդուն խաբել ուզենայ, ասեղը տալտայ (հովանի) կ'ընէ:

A wife wanting to cheat on her husband will use a needle for a shield.

They are often devoid of pity and killing in their sarcasm:

Շատ սիրուն էր, էն էլ տուեց ծաղիկ հանեց:

As if he weren't ugly enough, now he's got the pox, too.

To put an obnoxious and boastful person in his place, they say:

Չամուրը (ցեխը) պառկէ, խալիպդ (կաղապարդ) տէս:

Lie down in the mud, and look at the impression you have left.

Nor are proverbs afraid to call a spade a spade: they can be earthy, at times even scatological:

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Պարի ելլողը ոռը պիտի խաղցնէ:
He who gets up to dance, must move his arse.

When complaining about bad luck, people say:

*Երկու սափաթ (կողով) քաք ուղարկեն մեր քաղաքը, մէկը
մեր տունը կու գայ:*

*If they send two baskets of shit to our city, one will come to
our house.*

Sexual humor is not absent:

*Հասած աղջիկը որ բախտ ունենար, թախտ աւելուց ճուճ
կը գտնէր:*

*If an old maid were lucky enough, she would find a prick
while sweeping the floor.*

I had originally decided not to include in this collection proverbs containing vulgarisms. However, as my involvement with Armenian proverbs grew, I came to recognize how much color they added to the palette of proverbial expression. Without them, this collection would fail to be a full and accurate presentation of a living colorful oral tradition. Furthermore, in the words of Confucius—himself a master of proverbial expression—“fine words and an insinuating appearance are seldom associated with true virtue.”

Proverbs generalize human experience. Making reference not only to commonly known phenomena and events (birth and death, marriage and divorce, human character, etc.), proverbs also penetrate into the smallest details of life which are very specific in terms of the emotional or intellectual impact that they have on people. Thus, proverbs generalize a great range of subjective experience and this, at times, can lead to conclusions which contradict each other. Hence, the presence of parallel texts with conflicting messages within the same thematic group:

Աշխատողը անօթի չի մնայ:
A worker will not starve.

Աշխատողը անօթի կը մնայ:

A worker will starve.

At times, two messages contradicting each other can appear within the same proverb:

Մէկ կարգուողն է զղջացել, մէկ չկարգուողը:

Sorry is the one who marries, and sorry is the one who doesn't.

A special category among Armenian proverbs comprises the so-called "situational sayings." These do not function as common proverbs do, i.e., generalizing past experiences, condensing wisdom, giving commandments, advice, or the like. Instead, they typify people, things and events in a given situation by labeling them, or summing up existing circumstances. For example, to pass judgment on impatient people, Armenians say:

Էրիկ կ'ուզեմ, հիմա կ'ուզեմ:

I want a husband, and I want him now.

This saying can be used in reference to both impatient men or women, a factor which speaks for the conventionality of such units.

In another instance, in order to define a conversation at cross purposes, people say:

«Բարեւ քեզ», «քաղքէն կու գամ»:

"Good day to you," "I am coming from town."

To describe a chaotic situation, they say:

Շունը տէրը չի ճանաչում:

The dog doesn't recognize his master.

To declare one's tasks accomplished and duties fulfilled, one would say:

Ալիւրս մաղեցի, մաղս կախեցի:
I sifted my flour; I hung up my sieve.

Insisting on their innocence, people may say:
Սոխ չեմ կերել, որ բերանս այրի:
I didn't eat onions for my mouth to burn.

To describe very cold weather, the following hyperbolic saying is used:

Թքնես նէ, գետինը չ'իջնար:
If you spit, it won't reach the ground.

To acknowledge changing situations or new circumstances, they say:

Ան վաղ էր՝ որ էչք կաղ էր:
It was a long time ago that the donkey used to limp.

Some of these sayings, such as the one just mentioned, make no sense if one considers the lexical meaning of the words involved. These sayings are clichés which not only give a special flavor to a conversation, but also signal its initiation, maintenance, or conclusion. In that respect, they play a substantial role in the organization of discourse.

On the prospective readership. One of the biggest concerns accompanying the present work was the constant awareness of just how many different backgrounds my readers might have. Will they know Armenian? Will the Armenian reader lean towards East or West Armenian⁵, or some compromise between the two? For obvious reasons, the book is addressed mainly to West Armenians who, as members of the Diaspora, have less access to national folklore. But here too, the question is: Does the reader belong to the older, linguistically and socio-culturally more competent group, or to a younger generation, less experienced in these matters? In order to reach each and every one of these groups, the interests of some had to be inevitably, if only temporarily, shunted aside. For example, in

order to explain to the competent Armenian reader the choices I had to make with regard to the language of the proverbs, I have included samples representing various Armenian dialects (pp. 25-26) at the risk of trying the patience of an English reader unable to follow, let alone appreciate the discussed linguistic differences (pp. 27-30). Similarly, to make dialectisms (regional varieties of form) in the proverbs understandable to all Armenian readers, the literary equivalent of some words was added in brackets in the Armenian text. In other cases, the English reader and/or the less informed child of the Diaspora were addressed. Certain Armenian words that do not have English equivalents and are used in the English text have been marked by asterisks and explained in a glossary at the back of the collection (pp. 473-476). As well, short clarifications have been provided in brackets after particularly ambiguous proverbs.

On the spelling and the pronunciation of the wording. The rendering of the pronunciation of many words in the Armenian text has also posed problems, since the existing two versions of Armenian (Western and Eastern) differ as to the pronunciation of a number of graphic signs for consonants (see pp. 468-472). I have based the spelling of certain Turkish loan words on the West Armenian pronunciation. For instance, for the colloquial word [dard] or [derd] for "worry" which in East Armenian folkloristic literature is presented as դարդ⁶, I chose to spell տարտ or տէրտ to comply with West Armenian standards. This of course may alienate the East Armenian reader. When transliterating Armenian words for the English-speaking reader, however, I have considered both versions of pronunciation. Such is the case with դանակ "knife," [danak E / tanag W] where the East Armenian pronunciation is indicated by the abbreviation 'E' and the West Armenian by 'W'. In rare cases, I let myself be guided by intuition and chose to give only one, the most common phonetic version. For example, գրող "Angel of Death" has been transliterated only as [grogh], since this word is so very well established in its East Armenian pronunciation. This again could discomfort some West Armenian reader.

It would be a very interesting task in and of itself to give the transliteration of each proverb under each Armenian entry. However,

this would go beyond the scope of this anthology and double its volume, since I would have to include for each proverb both Western and Eastern transliterations. Instead, I believe I have reached a more manageable solution by appending the Armenian alphabet twice, with both Western and Eastern pronunciations (see pp. 468-470). These tables are also followed by a brief summary of how the main phonetic differences between the two versions came about (pp. 471-472). This will allow any particularly interested reader, with some effort, to read the Armenian text and/or to get some idea of the poetic structure (rhyme, alliteration, etc.) of the original, as well as to comprehend some of the strategies employed in translation.

On the selection of the proverbs. As part of the common knowledge of any native speaker, proverbs are "one of the most easily observed and collected genres of traditional expression" (Abrahams 1972:117). The present collection does not pretend to be all-inclusive. What it does aim at is a balanced presentation of 2,500 Armenian proverbs from East, West and various dialects. It draws upon my own diverse experience as a child of the Diaspora who then spent almost 30 years in what was until recently called Soviet Armenia. There proverbs were my daily companions.⁷ As a child, my ear was trained in my own proverb-addicted family where West Armenian was cultivated at its best. Later in Armenia, I was lucky enough to be surrounded by people from all walks of life who made proverbs live - the man of the soil, the man in the street, and the man of letters (and women too, although proverbs are notoriously old-fashioned in their gender biases in all languages which distinguish gender. Fortunately, the Armenian language does not have a category of gender). I was also fortunate to work with Armenian scholars and benefit from their knowledge of and enthusiasm for Armenian folklore. Among them was Aram Ghanalanian whose ground-breaking work *Առաժառիկ* [*aradzani*], the Anthology of Armenian Proverbs (1960), continues to inspire my scholarly interest.⁸ Ghanalanian's monumental work deserves a broader readership. The anthology presented here draws considerably on his collection, which is based on published and unpublished Armenian proverb collections, on ethnographic and literary journals, on the

works of prominent Armenian writers, and on data which he collected himself (Ghanalanian 1960:LXXXIX). It is my aim to add to the solid academic foundation and spirit of serious inquiry he initiated and to present it in all its breadth to the English-speaking world. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first large collection of Armenian proverbs in English translation backed by scholarly research. My inventory consists of 2,500 units. A substantial part of it I have selected from Ghanalanian's work, based upon their currency and intelligibility. This I have supplemented with a great number of proverbs not included in Ghanalanian's collection. They are drawn from my own experience in both Armenian communities before and after the year 1960. It remains to point out that the ability to rely on my own linguistic intuition in both versions of Armenian, instead of canvassing "native informants," has been a tremendous advantage for my work.

On the arrangement of the Anthology. The traditional organization of proverb collections alphabetically, either by first word or by key word, separates proverbs that are related either thematically or by the messages they carry. For the Armenian reader, this discourages browsing, surely one of the most pleasant ways of acquainting oneself with the genre. For the English-speaking reader, alphabetical order in Armenian would be meaningless. In the absence of any better solution, it made sense to me to adopt Ghanalanian's technique of dividing the Armenian proverbs into thematic chapters with each chapter organized by sub-themes. I have, however, refined his technique by creating my own thematic divisions and sub-divisions and by making them more specific and easier to index. This format accommodates a number of proverbs that would otherwise be jumbled in appendices, as they are in Ghanalanian's collection. In sum, there are 11 main headings, 200 sub-headings, supplemented by one appendix of unclassifiable proverbs arranged alphabetically. For ease of reference, an index by key word has been supplied for the English translation.

The first chapter, "Human Relations and the Power of Language" contains proverbs dealing with the complexities of human conduct with respect to friends and enemies, guests, neighbors, as well

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as the use of language as a tool and/or weapon in these relationships. "Commandments" presents a set of precepts for an ethical and decent life; "Do no wrong" is the keynote of this section. The chapter "Family and Relatives" describes the system of stereotypes that ruled the extended patriarchal family. "Human Character" condemns and ridicules the lowly aspects of the human character and glorifies the "humble," the "diligent," and the "honest," in short, true human nobility. The chapter "Human Nature" describes recurrent patterns of human behavior, emphasizing the decisive role of habit in forming personalities. "States of Being" focuses on various human conditions, circumstances, and predicaments. Of special interest is "Beliefs and Superstitions," which draws out the idiosyncrasies of an ancient Christian belief system founded on pagan soil and surrounded by powerful non-Christian nations. "Country and City" shows the Armenian proverb as most recognizably "Armenian," evoking the climate, geography and landscape of rural and urban Armenia, and its people's nostalgia for a lost paradise. The chapter "Experience, Education, Profession" provides information on the role attributed to nature and nurture, the social environment, education and work. In the chapter "Injustice, Wealth, and Power," proverbs protest against the unequal distribution of wealth, while showing how the system can be fought or manipulated. The final chapter, "Lessons from Life" summarizes the conclusions that people have drawn from long and recurrent experience. An appendix of miscellaneous proverbs, each standing alone, completes the anthology.

1. The Language of Armenian Proverbs

Many Armenian proverbs date back to antiquity; they are capsules of condensed history and this often can be reflected in their linguistic presentation. The date of origin can be estimated in some cases by their content, vocabulary, archaic style,⁹ and names of historic people and places¹⁰ mentioned. The Armenian proverb, like the Armenian people, has had to be tough, tart and smart to survive. Today it must also bridge the major divide between the two existing linguistic communities, East and West Armenian. Not only do Armenian proverbs represent both groups, but they have helped to hold together the many regional varieties of Armenian, and thus both to reflect and to promote the rich diversity of this culture.

To the linguist, one of the most fascinating features is their relative freedom from stylization, which all too often has tended to standardize proverbs in other languages. Many Armenian proverbs have kept some of their original dialectal character while other Indo-European languages have preferred to recast their popular maxims into a more literary form. Below are a few typical examples of proverbs that have retained their original regional features, as identified in Ghanalanian's (1960) collection. Though these features are, of course, lost in translation, I direct my English reader's attention to the considerable geographic scope and diversity:

Քաղցր լեզուն հազար սրի ջուղար կու տայ: (Yerevan)

One sweet tongue can fend off a thousand blows of a sword.

Քեասիպութիւնը լեղի կուտ է, ո՛չ կը թքուի, ո՛չ կը ծամուի: (Manazgerd)

Poverty is a bitter pit; you can't spit it out, you can't swallow it.

Փորս մօտ է, քանց քորս: (Kharpert)

My stomach is closer to me than my sister's.

Վախի գլուխը սաղ կ'ըլի: (Lori)

The fearful head survives.

Շատուորով գործ արա, քչուորով կ'էր: (Shirak)

Work with many, eat with few.

Ճեղնը կտրած տեղը վէր կ'ընկնէ: (Karabagh)

The branch will fall where it is cut.

Հարիւր ասղից մի կացին չ'ըլի: (Shulaver)

You cannot make an axe from a thousand needles.

Իմ մեռնելուց խեւ, թող կտրի աղբուր ու գէտ: (Van)

After I die, may all rivers and wells run dry.

Էնքան մօտ են, որ մէջները ձու դնես՝ կ'էփի: (Oshakan)

They are so close that an egg could cook between them.

Դրսից փիլայ, ներսից կիլայ: (Mush)

Outside it shines, inside it whines.

Խալխի ասա-կօսէն ո՞վ կու մուծ կացնէ: (Tbilissi)

Who can stop the rumors of the people?

Since focusing on regional features is beyond the scope of the present work, the specific origin will not be indicated for the proverbs that follow.

In this edition, I have tried to preserve as much as I could of the regional diversity of proverbs that lives on even today in different dialects as well as in the colloquial speech of Armenians from East and West. Therefore, readers of the Armenian text will immediately be struck by the broad variety of wording and grammar in Armenian proverbs. Readers will also no doubt notice the preference given to the East Armenian version; this quite naturally reflects the simple fact that Armenian proverbs are most at home on Armenian territory where the East Armenian forms prevail. To illustrate just a few of these striking differences:

(1) We find diversities at the grammatical level. For instance, the auxiliary verb *էմ* "to be," and particularly the third-person singular copula, corresponding to the English "is" can vary in its presentation. In some proverbs, the copula *ւ* replaces the normative *է*; this *ւ* typically belongs to the dialects of the Ararat valley and is particularly characteristic of Yerevan colloquial speech. What is more, the copula *ւ* can even be highlighted by rhyme:

Ով կարդայ, նա մարդ ւ:
Education makes the person.

The infinitive of the auxiliary verb "to be" is presented in its two main versions: *լինել* (E) and *լլլալ* (W). The corresponding forms for the third- person copula derived from these alternates are (*կը*) *լինի* (E) and (*կ')**լլլայ* (W). These two basic forms can appear also in such regional variations as (*կ')**լլնի*, (*կ')**լլի*, (*կ')**լլի*, (*կ')**եղնի* and others. The negative counterparts of these forms are *չի* *լինի*, *չլլար*, *չի* *լլնի*, *չլլի*, *չի* *եղնի*, etc.

Readers will also notice diversity in other morphological features such as:

- a) the use of the indefinite article as preposed *մի* (*մի մարդ* E), and postposed *մը* (*մարդ մը* W) "a person," "a man";
- b) the ablative ending *-ից* (*տնից* E) "from the house," or *-ուց* (*մարդուց* E) "from the person," and *-էն* (*գիւղէն* W) "from the village";
- c) the locative ending *-ում* (*աշխարհում* E), and the analytical form of the locative (*աշխարհի մէջ* W / E) "in the world," etc.

(2) At the lexical level, regional differences lead to an even greater variety of forms. The Armenian word *գայլ* "wolf," for example, occurs, depending on the dialect, as *գալ*, *գէլ*, *գիւլ*, *գիւլ* (genitive), etc.

To list all possible grammatical, lexical, and stylistic variations, used in the two main versions of Armenian as well as in the major dialects, is beyond the scope of the present study. Still one point must be stressed: whatever their original forms, Armenian proverbs lend themselves readily to "code switching" from East to West Armenian

and vice versa. This allows them to function in either version. Compare:

East: Վախեցի՛ր էն մարդուց, որ չի վախենալ Աստծուց:
 West: Վախցի՛ր ան մարդէն, որ չի վախնար Աստուծմէ:
Beware of those who do not fear God.

A similar flexibility makes itself felt at the phonetic level as well (cf. pp. 468-472), as seen in the transliteration of the following proverb:

Կուժ չինող չատ, կոթ դնող քիչ:
 East: [kouzh shinogh shat, kot dnogh kich]
 West: [gouzh shinogh shad, got tnogh kich]
There are many who make a jug, but few who put a handle on it.

Considering the nature of the present work, the regional diversity as captured effectively by Ghalanian (1960) is here reduced to a certain extent. Heavily-marked regionalisms which would make some proverbial units incomprehensible even to some native Armenian speakers had to be reformulated and linguistically simplified. Adjustments were made in the direction of either East or West versions of Armenian, depending on the affinity of the dialect. Compare the following proverb from the Ashtarak region as presented in Ghalanian's collection (Ghalanian 1960:16):

Կուղբկին աղջիկ չեն տալի, նա ուղբմ ա գանքանչն էլ սիրուն ըլնի:

The text of this proverb was changed to a more accessible East Armenian form:

Կուղբկին աղջիկ չեն տալիս, նա ուղբում է գոքանչն էլ սիրուն լինի:

They refuse the hunchback (the hand of) their daughter, he demands that the (future) mother-in-law be beautiful too.

[About overbearing and presumptuous people]

For all the divergences separating the Armenian literary language in its two versions, there is a unifying trait in proverbial language worth discussing. It refers to the mood of verbs most frequently used in proverbial language cross-culturally in order to express all-embracing generalizations. For most of the major European languages, it is the present tense of the indicative mood which is prevalent. Compare:

English: *Every cook praises his own broth.*

German: *Jeder Krämer lobt seine Ware.*

French: *Chacun loue son oeuvre.*

Spanish: *Cada ollero su olla alaba.*

Now, the two Armenian versions build their present indicative paradigms differently, although both have complex constructs. Whereas in West Armenian the present indicative is built by combining the particle *կը* with the present subjunctive paradigm of the conjugated verb (*կը լսեմ* from the verb *լսել* "to hear"), in East Armenian the present indicative is formed from the imperfective participle of the conjugated verb ending in *-ում* and the present paradigm of the auxiliary *եմ* (*լսում եմ*). The ending *-ում*, incidentally, constitutes one of the most distinctive features of East Armenian morphology. Compare present indicative forms of the verb *լսել* "to hear" in the two versions of Armenian:

West Armenian: *կը լսեմ, կը լսես, կը լսէ*, etc. as well as their negative counterparts *չեմ լսեր, չես լսեր, չի լսեր*, etc.

East Armenian: *լսում եմ, լսում ես, լսում է*, etc. as well as their negative counterparts *չեմ լսում, չես լսում, չի լսում*, etc.

Note the following proverb in the East and West versions:

East: *Ամէն մարդ իր ապրանքն է գովում:*

West: *Ամէն մարդ իր ապրանքը կը գովէ:*

Everyone praises his own goods.

However, when it comes to proverbial expression, the Eastern version of Armenian seldom uses its present indicative as in the

example above. It is rather another mood, which in form (*կը* + subjunctive) coincides with the indicative mood in the Western version of Armenian. These (*կը* + subjunctive) forms are treated in East Armenian grammars as a special mood, appearing under various terms, such as *ենթադրական* *suppositional* or *hypothetical* mood (Abeghian 1965:327, Djahukian 1969:226; S. Abrahamian 1981:218), *հաստատողական* *confirmative* mood (Assatryan 1983:329), and in the most traditional term *պայմանական* *conditional* mood (Aghayan 1967:370). The *conditional* mood in East Armenian is considered to have two tenses, the future tense (*կը լսի*) and the past (*կը լսեր*). As a rule, proverbs of East Armenian provenance use the future tense of the *conditional* mood in both affirmative (*կը լսի*) and negative (*չի լսի*) versions. These forms slightly differ from the Western present indicative *կը*- forms. Compare some examples of the *conditional future* tense paradigm in East Armenian:

կը լսեմ, կը լսես, կը լսի, etc., as well as their negative counterparts *չեմ լսի, չես լսի, չի լսի*, etc.

What we see in the *conditional future* tense is, as Kozinceva puts it, the expression of “necessity and regularity” (1991:83) expected in recurrent situations. Below is an example of its usage:

Շուկը տիրոջը կը ճանաչի:
The dog recognizes its master.

The *conditional* mood is employed not only in affirmative, but also in negative statements:

Շուկը չան միս չի ուտի:
A dog doesn't eat another dog's meat.

In some proverbs, this mood expresses prediction, foreseeing what may or may not happen in the future normally. Thus it expresses the “future-oriented worldview” (Dundes:1980) in Armenian proverbs. In such cases the indicative future tense is used in English translation:

Ծառի տակին պառկելուն, բերանդ տանձ չի ընկնի:
If you lie down under a tree, no pear will fall into your mouth.

In most Armenian proverbs the *conditional future* tense expresses potentiality and/or possibility in recurrent circumstances. The translation of such proverbs into English draws upon such modalities as “can,” “may,” “should,” and “must.”

Լու քերթելով մարդ չես դառնալ:
You cannot amount to anything by skinning a flea.

Note the parallel use of the negative form չի քանդի and the affirmative կը քանդի in the same proverb:

Կնկայ չինած տունը Աստուած չի քանդի, Աստծու չինած տունը կինը կը քանդի:
A home built by a woman not even God can destroy; a home built by God a woman can destroy.

The “potentiality” meaning of the *conditional* mood disappears entirely when it is used in a didactic proverb. In such cases the message is: “They do not (normally)....” This type of proverb is usually translated into the English prohibitive imperative form: “Don’t” Compare the translation of the didactic proverbs below which, in English, requires the imperative mood:

Պառկած շանը քար չեն դնի:
Don’t stone a sleeping dog.

Խօսելիս մեծի խօսքը չեն կտրի:
When grown-ups talk, don’t interrupt.

Like proverbs expressed in the imperative mood in languages, this type tends to express a prescriptive canon or a warning.

Thus, the use of the *conditional future* tense rather than its *indicative present* in proverbs sets East Armenian apart from most European languages. At the same time, however, the use of կը- forms and their negative counterparts in Armenian proverbial expression is a trait unifying both West and East versions. It also shows the wide range of meaning which the present indicative in West Armenian has.

As in other languages, Armenian proverbs can appear in the form of various sentence types. They can be declarative (simple statements), to express lessons drawn from life:

Ամէն խօսք իր տեղն ունի:
Every word has its place.

They can be imperative, with didactic content conveyed as commands:

Գէլին քեռի ըսէ, մինչեւ կամուրջն անցնիս:
Be friendly with the wolf until you cross the bridge.
[Lit.: Call the wolf "uncle" ...]

They can be interrogative, mostly seeking answers for the incomprehensible:

Գաթան ծոցը պաս (պահք) բռնել կ'ըլլա՞մ մի:
How can you fast with a gata in your pocket [lit.: chest]?*

Among imperative proverbs, prohibitions are particularly common. They usually start with the prohibitive particle *մի'* [mi!'] "don't":

Մի' լինիր ուրազի պէս, միշտ դէպի քեզ, այլ եղիր սղոցի պէս, մէկ դէպի մեզ, մէկ դէպի քեզ:
Don't be like an axe, always aimed toward you; be like a saw, once toward us, once toward you.

Even more frequently, prohibitive proverbs start with the more categoric double conjunction *ո՛չ ... ո՛չ* "neither ... nor."

Ո՛չ քաղցր եղիր, որ կլուն, ո՛չ դառն եղիր որ թքուն:
Be neither sweet and swallowed, nor sour and spurned.

Unique, it seems, to Armenian proverbial expression is the tonality which can, in a great number of sayings, mark highly

emotional and passionate colloquial speech. Among proverbs reflecting this trait, are the “exclamatory” proverbs, with a distinctive melody all their own: vowels are drawn out (as indicated by the superscript ‘).

Exclamatory proverbs express bewilderment and discontent:

Ո՛վ դատի, ո՛վ ուտի:

Who is working, who is eating?

Many sentences are pronounced with a rising intonation, which here expresses protest and resentment:

Ամառուայ արեւէն ի՛նչ հասկցայ, որ ձմեռուայ արեւէն ի՛նչ հասկնամ:

What did I get from the summer sun that I now should expect something from the winter sun?

Բազը չամիչ չատ ա – ինծի ու քեզի ի՛նչ:

There are lots of raisins in the vineyard; what is in it for me or for you?

Since there are no equivalents for units of this type in English, most of these cases had to be rendered into English as questions. In fact, questions and exclamations are known to be related to one another (Dupriez 1991:118).¹¹ Emphatic expression is also cast in the form of rhetorical questions bordering on exclamations.

In such proverbs, exclamations and questions are interchangeable. Many of them are sarcastic and tend to exaggerate:

Գլուխը կտրեցիր, մօրուքին վրայ՝ կու լաս:

You cut off the head, and you are crying for the beard?

Other rhetorical questions imply a negative answer of the type “Never!” “Nothing!” or “Nobody!” etc.:

Որքը ե՞րբ է խնդացել:

When has an orphan ever laughed?

Մախաթը մաշի՝ ասեղի չափ կը մնայ, ասեղը մաշի՝ ի՞նչ կը մնայ:

When a packing-needle wears out, you've still got a needle, when a needle wears out, what have you got?

So far, all the examples have presented proverbs as spoken by a single voice and, most of the time, restricted to a single short sentence. We should not overlook, however, another common form of emphatic proverbial speech, where the message is disclosed by means of a verbal exchange. These are the so-called "dramatized proverbs," consisting of two or even three turns which are usually initiated or concluded by "author's" or "narrator's" notes, elucidating the framework of the dialogue and its protagonists. Often one of the speakers is specified, while the other, an impersonal and anonymous speech partner, stands for the people as a whole. As we will see, exchanges can unfold in a variety of speech act combinations; most commonly, however, they consist of one question and one answer:

Զկանը հարցրին. «Ծովեմէն ի՞նչ խապար ունիս» ասաւ՝ «Խապար չառ ունիմ, համա բերանս ջրով լիքն է»

They asked the fish, "What's new in the sea?"; it said, "I have lots of news, but my mouth is full of water."

[On self-censorship]

In the following examples, a few dramatized proverbs with various messages will feature the "camel" in interaction with an unidentified human partner. These exchanges display a variety of speech act pairs other than the simple question and answer combination.

a) statement and statement:

Ուղտն ասաց. «Շարքար (մետաքսագործ) եմ.» ասացին. «Ոտք ու ձեռքիդ սաղում է»

The camel said, "I am a silkmaker." They said, "Your hands and feet are surely suited for it."

[About a boaster who lacks talent]

b) question and question:

Ուղտին ասացին. «Շլինքդ (վիզ) խի՞ ա ծուռ.» ասաց. «Ի՞նչ ա դուզ որ չլինքս դուզ լինի:»

They asked the camel, "Why is your neck so crooked?" He said, "What is straight about me, that you should expect a straight neck?"

[On knowing yourself]

c) statement and question:

Ուղտին ասացին. «Աչքդ լոյս, քեզ որդի է ծնուել.» ասաց. «Ի՞նչ անեմ, որ իմ բեռը ինձանից չի պակասի:»

They told the camel, "Good news! A son is born to you." "He answered, "What do I care, if it won't lessen my load?"

[Resenting constant exploitation]

At times, the "author's" introduction can describe the situational background in which the interaction takes place:

Տկլորը տկլորի ետեւիցը կպաւ, ասեցին. «Ի՞նչ ես անում.» ասեց. «Այրբ (ամօթ) եմ պարտկում:»

One naked man covered up another naked man. They asked him: "What are you doing?" He said, "I am covering up his shame."

[On ignoring one's own shortcomings]

The actors in the drama can also belong to one and the same species. In the following text there are two fish fighting with each other for more space in the frying pan:

Զուկը ձկան ասաց. «Դէնը պառկի.» - «Որտեղ պառկեմ, երկուսս էլ մի թաւումն ենք տապակւում:»

One fish said to another, "Move over." "Where can I move? We are both being fried in the same pan."

[On the futility of antagonism between fellow victims]

The dialogue in proverbs can also appear as reported speech. To portray human ignorance and stupidity in vivid colors, Armenians use the following proverb:

Ես ասում եմ՝ ներքինի եմ, նա ասում ա՝ քանի՞ տղայ
ունես:

*I am saying I am a eunuch; he is asking me how many
children I have.*

Dramatized proverbs can often consist of more than two turns. Note the following dialogue consisting of three consecutive utterances:

Կաքաւին ասացին. «Ինչի՞ ոտներդ կարմիր ա.» - «Յուրա
ա.» ասաց: - «Հա.» ասացին, «մենք քեզ ամառն էլ տեսանք:»

*They asked the partridge, "Why are your feet so red?" "It's
the cold," it replied. "Well," they said, "we saw you in the summer
too."*

[On making invalid excuses]

The dialogue can very often occur as a soliloquy, a "question and answer" performed by a single actor, the speaker himself:

Քոռն ի՞նչ կ'ուզի. երկու աչք:

What does the blind man wish for? Two eyes.

[On aspirations that are obvious]

c) There are also some proverbs which incorporate fragments of reported speech. These fragments can be of various length, and are usually enclosed in quotation marks:

Եղած բանին «չնորհաւոր» կ'ասեն:

*If something is over and done with, you say
"Congratulations!"*

[i.e., What you cannot change, you accept.]

Մօրուքս բռնկեր է, կ'ըսէ. «Կեցի՛ր չիպուխս վառեմ:»

My beard is on fire, and he says, "Let me light my pipe."

Some Armenian proverbs can be traced back to longer well-known narrative structures, such as fables, folktales and jokes.

Proverbs of this type can appear as a condensed summary or as a concluding sentence of the original tale. Most such proverbs make use of a special past tense, the so-called "reportative past." Reportative constructions can be formed from any verb, when an event is alleged to have taken place. This particular meaning is hidden behind the tense and it is always a great task to translate it into English without losing the colloquial flavor of the saying. The translation often requires the use of introductory phrases such as 'people say' or 'they say', Note the parenthesis in the translation of the following proverb:

Իշուհն զոռցին ըսեր են. «Ձայնդ անսպա՛ռ» ալ զոռցը չէ
կարեր:

They said to a braying ass, "What a beautiful voice!" (They say) he hasn't stopped braying since.

[To an overbearing person who lacks talent.]

The use of reportative constructions suggest that some degree of popularity and currency is enjoyed by the proverbs that incorporate these constructions:

«Բաւքին» (գուցէ) ցանել են, չի բուսեր:

(They say) that they planted the "perhaps," but it didn't grow.

In all the examples above, the proverbs were unspecified as to the implied "speaker." They were meant to represent the voice of the people as a whole. However, there is a large number of Armenian proverbs whose speaker can be identified as belonging to a particular member of society, most often a member of the micro- or macro-family. That person may be a mother-in-law showing her special preference for her son-in-law:

Փեսէս տուն եկաւ, երեսս գոյն եկաւ:

My son-in-law showed up, my face again lit up.

[Lit.: My son-in-law came home, my face regained its color.]

It can be the senior member of the house bemoaning his age and his declining status:

Բանի փոքր էի, մեծից էի վախենում. մեծացալ, փոքրից
եմ վախենում:

While I was young, I feared the old; now I am old, I fear the young.

The proverb can also be identified as spoken by the godfather who does not want to assume too many obligations toward his godchild. It is mostly used metaphorically, when somebody shirks excessive responsibilities:

Կնքելու տէրն եմ, հո ապրեցնելու էլ տէրը չեմ:
I am willing to baptize (the child), but not to support (him).

In other cases, the original speaker cannot be easily established. A representative example for this category of proverbs is the following:

Հէ՛մ լանք, հէ՛մ երթանք:
Let's cry, but let's still go.

In this obscure proverb, the speaker is a bride. The saying goes back to a folk joke according to which a bride, as part of the wedding ritual, cries just before leaving her paternal home. When asked if she would rather stay with her parents, she gives this conclusive answer. This proverb is often quoted when people pretend to resist something in order to hide their eagerness.

2. The Structure

One of the most distinctive features of proverbs is their well-known tendency to follow set patterns or formulas. The formulaic nature of proverbs, as Röhrich and Mieder (1977) observe, makes this folk genre uniquely suited to structural analysis. In proverbs as in no other branch of folklore, structural models can be instantly and consistently identified. The structural definition of proverbs given by Dundes is the most insightful and comprehensive I have found: "A proverb is a traditional propositional statement consisting of at least one descriptive element, a descriptive element consisting of a topic and a comment" (Dundes 1975:180). In other words, proverbs comprise a known item (a topic) about which something new (a comment) is put forward. In a minimal structure consisting of two words: *Time flies*, "time" is the topic and "flies" the comment. Dundes also explains that due to their mainly binary nature, it is theoretically impossible to find proverbs consisting of just one word. Binarity, however, does not imply necessarily a two-word structure. In fact, despite the trend for pithiness, two-word proverbs are rare. Both the topic and the comment can be represented in more than one word, as the following proverb with the markers separating the topic from the comment shows:

Մարդու աչքը հանողը / իր միսն ու արիւնն է:
The one who plucks out your eye, / is your flesh and blood.
[Said mainly of bad children]

Armenian proverbs are just as formulaic as those in other languages. The underlying structure of a given proverb serves as the basis for the creation of new units. This universal tendency towards re-generative patterns finds in Armenian its own, language-specific expression.

A preliminary examination of the present collection of

proverbs reveals a series of formulas underlying them. I will touch upon just a few of the many two-part formulas:

1. Ա-ն Բ կ'անի (A does B or A will do B)

Փողը կը խօսի:
Money talks.

And the negative version:

2. Ա-ն Բ չի անի (A does not or will not do B)

Շիտակ պատը չի փլչի:
The straight wall does not fall.

3. Ա-ն Բ ունի (A has B)

Ժամանակը թեւեր ունի:
Time flies [Lit.: Time has wings].¹²

Some formulas start with the generalizing Ամէն "every":

4. Ամէն Ա Բ կ'անի (Every A does or will do B)

Ամէն շուն իր տիրոջը կը ճանչնայ:
Every dog recognizes its master.

And formula 4 with a negation:

5. Ամէն Ա Բ չի անի (Every A does not do B or Not every A will do B)

Ամէն ամպ անձրեւ չի բերի:
Not every cloud brings rain.

Despite the trend for brevity, short and simple equational formulas of the type "A is B" are not frequent in Armenian. A more common equational formula is the one which inserts a brief relative clause *որ կայ*, [literally: "which exists"] between the topic and the

comment. This specific element divides the proverb in two parts, thus creating a balance between the two components. As Abrahams observes, the balance in a proverb arises from a binary composition which is perceptibly broken in the middle (Abrahams 1962:120).

6. Ան որ կայ, Բ է (A [which exists] is B)

Մարդը որ կայ, մեղքի տունն ա:
A human being [which exists] is a house of sin.

Other very frequent patterns include:

7. Առանց Ա-ի Բ չի լինի (Without A there is no B)

Առանց արեւի վարդ չի բացուի:
Without the sun no rose will bloom.

8. Ա չեղած Բ չի լինի (There is no B before A)

Ձմեռ չեկած ձիւն չի դար:
There is no snow before winter.

9. Ա չարած Բ չեն անի (Before doing A, don't do B)

Ձուրը չտեսած չեն բռալիկնալ:
Don't take your shoes off before you see the water.

10. Լաւ է Ա քան(ց) Բ (Better A than B)

Լաւ է անունը բարի քանց գանձն աշխարհի:
It's better to have a good name than all the treasures of the world.

So far we have been dealing with full sentences. A closer look shows that Armenian proverbs, like their counterparts in other languages, appear as elliptical structures as well. Proverbs of this type do not correspond to the classical notion of a sentence in Armenian.¹³

Compare the simple symmetrical structures without predicate:

11. abstract noun - abstract noun:

Անօթութիւն - անամօթութիւն:
Starvation - humiliation.

12. modifier + noun - modifier + noun:

Փէսի շուարք - փշի շուարք:
The shadow of the son-in-law, the shadow of the thorn.

These formulas usually convey regularity of content. For example, to express the injustice existing in this world, the following formula underlies many proverbs:

13. Մէկին Ա, միւսին Բ (To the one A, to the other B)

Մէկին ծով, միւսին սով:
One gets the feast, the other the famine.
[Lit.: To the one the sea, to the other starvation.]

As Milner shows, an important trait of a proverb is the symmetrical structure of its form and content which usually consists of two oppositional two-part structures (Milner 1969:200):

Աջով տուր, որ ձախովդ առնես:
Give with your right (hand) to receive with your left.

In this proverb, words of opposite meaning, i.e., antonyms, alternate in the same proverb. Compare here the opposite counterparts: տուր "give" vs. առ "receive," աջ "right" vs. ձախ "left." In a situational saying used in order to inspire endurance to the impatient, people say:

Շատը գնաց, քիչը մնաց:
Much is gone, little is left.

Here the antonyms are շատը “much” vs. քիչը “little” and գնաց “is gone” vs. մնաց “is left.” Similar structures are characteristic of proverbs in all languages. Permjakov lists an entire series of proverbial antonyms. They include: part/whole, old/young, content/form, action/reaction, wise/fool, male/female, sick/healthy, etc. (Permjakov:1988).

Armenian proverbs can illustrate a whole range of proverbs with two-part antonym structures. Consider:

Յիմարը տալիս է, խելօքն առնում:
The fool gives, the sage takes.

Longer constructions, extended by modifiers, are by no means rare:

Լա՞յն օրդ նեղ արա, որ նեղ օրդ լա՞յն ապրես:
Tighten yourself in your ample days, to live amply in your tight days.

Frequently, the combination of two oppositional halves culminates in word-play:

Մէկ կայ, հազար արժէ, հազար կայ՝ մէկ չ'արժէ:
A single man can be worth a thousand men, one thousand men can be worth not even a single man.

Տարի կայ օրուան կը պահէ, օր կայ՝ տարուան:
Some years feed a day, some days feed a year.

As all the above examples show, proverbs generalize. Hence, the feature “general and impersonal in meaning” holds true, “even when a particular speaker applies it to the situation of a particular hearer” (Norrick 1985:70). The stronger the abstraction, the broader the applicability of its instructive content to various life settings.

Typically proverbs refer either to a non-specific person or thing, or to an abstract circumstance of time, place, manner etc. This universality factor is reflected in the use of numerous grammatical categories geared to express generalization (Peukes:1977).

As impersonal, timeless and placeless items, we find the extensive use of indefinite and impersonal pronouns and nouns referring to a non-specified person or thing; timeless and placeless expressions are equally prevalent. Proverbs often draw on the corresponding Armenian vocabulary:

for impersonality: մարդ "a human being," "one," "some"; ոչ մէկը "nobody"; ով որ "whoever"; ամէն մարդ "everybody," etc.

for abstract things: բան(ը) "the thing," "the job"; ոչինչ "nothing"; ինչ որ "whatever"; ամէն բան "everything," etc.

for atemporality: միշտ "always"; երբեք "never"; ամէն օր "everyday," etc.

for alocality: որտեղ "where"; որտեղ որ "wherever"; ամէն տեղ "everywhere"; ոչ մի տեղ "nowhere," etc.

for an indefinite manner: ինչպէս "how"; ինչպէս որ "the way," etc.

Examples:

Մարդ որ իրան վնաս չտայ, չի կարող ուրիշին լաւութիւն անի:

One who does not harm himself, cannot help others.

Բանը չվերցնես տասը մատով, կը մնայ տասը տարով:

If you don't grab the job with ten fingers [i.e., both hands], it will stay for ten years.

Մէխի դարկած տեղը միշտ կ'երեւայ:

Where a nail was driven, there will always be a hole.

As a result, grammatical categories geared to personal, tem-

poral, local and modal specifics are neutralized to serve generalizations. Typically, deictic or pointing vocabulary (I, you, your, today, tomorrow, this, here, there, this way, etc.) when used in proverbs, appears in secondary functions to express an indefinite person, thing, time or place. Consider:

Ինձ համար կ'անես, քեզ համար կը սովորես:
You do it for me, you learn it for yourself.

Այսօրուայ բանը վաղուան մի թող:
Don't leave today's work for tomorrow.

Հսպէս գլխին, հսպէս գդակ:
To that kind of head, this kind of hat.

In all these proverbs, personal, local or temporal specifications are made to express generalizations rather than refer to a particular situation.

Neutralization also affects the grammatical category of imperative. In Armenian grammar books, the imperative is said to express an order, request or summons conveyed by a given speaker to a given hearer and to be anchored in a given context. When used in proverbs, however, imperative forms lose their indexical meaning, and are neutralized to a "general impersonal imperative." In such cases, the imperative forms serve rather as a general piece of advice, a prescription, a kind of directive (Kozinceva 1991:100-101). As in other languages (Peukes 1977:94), there are a great number of Armenian proverbs in which the second person familiar form is used. Note the didactic tone of "imperative proverbs":

Տո՛ւր, մի՛ վախենար, ա՛ռ, մի՛ ամաչիր:
Give, don't be afraid; take, don't be ashamed!

Շատ գիտես, քիչ խօսա:
Even though you know a lot, say little.

Whatever the selection, any Armenian proverb corpus will, on close examination, reveal an entire range of proverb formulas that include forms specially geared for generalization. Significant is in this respect the widespread use of participials ending in *-ող* and *-ած* (*խօսող* or *տեսած*) in many of these proverb formulas. Based on the agglutinative properties of Armenian morphology, these forms can appear agglutinated with the definite article (*խօսողը* or *տեսածը*), declension endings (*խօսողի* or *տեսածի*) and plural markers (*խօսողները* or *տեսածները*).¹⁴ Thus they can be used like regular nouns. As a rule, such formations have no parallel structure in the European languages and must be rendered into them by means of relative clauses. Compare, for instance, the translation: *խօսողը* "He who speaks ..." and *տեսածը* "What he sees/has seen/will see ...," or "That which is seen ...," etc. Such nominalizations can also carry negation markers and, like relative clauses, express not only affirmation but also negation (*խօսողը* vs. *չխօսողը* or *տեսածը* vs. *չտեսածը*): As a result, proverbs in Armenian are pithier than any of their equivalents in the major European languages.¹⁵ This is not because Armenian proverbs are more elliptical than proverbs in other languages, but because Armenian makes extensive use of participial nouns ending in *-ողը* and *-ածը*.

As a rule, *-ողը* formations indicate a non-specified actor in his or her habitual action. Consider the following proverb:

Ձու գողացողը ձի էլ կը գողանայ:
He who steals an egg will steal an ox.

Whereas deverbial nouns with *-ողը* refer to indefinite persons, nouns ending in *-ածը* designate an unidentified object or consequence of an action, as in:

Քամու բերածը քամին էլ կը տանի:
What the wind brings, the wind carries away.

In structural terms, most proverbs starting with a nominalization ending in *-ողը* in the nominative are of the simple

topic-comment type. Consequently, the formulas underlying proverbs with *-ողը* nominalizations correspond to most of those discussed above. Compare formulas 1, 2 and 5, where the topic is expressed by a *-ողը* formation:

1. Ա-ն Բ կ'անի (A will do B)

Ցանողը կը քաղէ:
He who sows will reap.

2. Ա-ն Բ չի անի (A will not do B)

Աշխատողը անօթի չի մնա:
He who works will not starve.

5. Ամէն Ա Բ չի անի (Not every A does B)

Ամէն կարդացողը Մուլլա չի լինի:
Not everybody who studies becomes a mullah.*

The *-ողը* formation appears often with the negation marker *չ-*:

Տղան չծեծողը ծնկուին կը ծեծէ:
He who doesn't beat his child will beat his knees.
[Beating the knees is a gesture of regret]

Structures of two statements with oppositional halves are also common:

Ոտքով ընկնողը կ'ելնայ, լեզուով ընկնողը չ'ելնայ:
He who trips over his feet will get up, he who trips over his tongue will not.

The opposite halves may contain *-ողը* formations as antonyms:

Գտնողը մի մեղք է անում, կորցնողը՝ հազար:

The finder commits one sin, the loser many.

[The finder is guilty of appropriating the found item, the loser is guilty of blaming others and of negligence.]

A linguistically more versatile and flexible system draws on the rich resources of verbal affixation (infixes which modify the verbal voice) in Armenian.

Կապրի զրկուողը, չի ապրի զրկողը:

He who is deprived survives, he who deprives doesn't.

Գինի խմողը մէկ կը հարբի, խմացնողը՝ հազար:

He who drinks gets drunk once, he who makes others drink gets drunk a thousand times.

A very recurrent pattern consisting of two statements with two oppositional *-ողը* formations is the following:

(չ)-ողը (չ)գիտի, (չ)-ողը (չ)գիտի

Compare the following example:

Ուտողը չգիտի, դատողը գիտի:

The eater doesn't know (the hardship), the provider knows.

Even more emphatically, people use exclamatory compositions:

Ուտողը գիտի, չուտողն ի՞նչ գիտի:

He who has eaten knows (the taste); what does the one know who hasn't!

Proverbs with *-ողը* formations are not always in subject position. They can appear in a variety of other sentential "slots":

Փիլաւ եփողի ապուրը կէ՛ր, ապուր եփողի փիլաւը մի՛
ռւտէր:
Eat the soup of those who cook pilaf; don't eat the pilaf of
those who cook soup.*

Լացացնողի մօտը զնա՛, ծիծաղացնողի մօտը մի՛ զնա:
*Go to the one who makes you cry, don't go to the one who
makes you laugh.*

Formulas with *-ածը* formations also feature prominently in
bipartite proverbs:

Անձրեւի ծեծածը կարկուտն էլ կը ծեծի:
What was battered by the rain will be battered by the hail.

More expressive are formulas repeating the suffix *-ած(ը)*:

14. *-ածը -ած է:*

Եղածը եղած է:
What happened, happened.

As mentioned above, expanded versions of bipartite structures
are more common:

Գիշերուայ կերածը կորած է:
What is eaten at night is wasted.

Still more significant, however, are the proverbs structured in
quadripartite formulas with oppositional halves, such as:

Մերի արածը դտած ա, կերածը՝ կորած:
*What an old person has done is won, what he has eaten is
wasted.*

Here again, since *-ածը* formations are used as regular nouns,

they can also be declined as such:

Ծնածին օրոցք, մեռածին դադար:

To the born the cradle; to the dead the coffin.

Given that brevity ranks so high among the distinguishing features of proverbs, it is no wonder that these laconic Armenian constructions should be used extensively in proverbs.¹⁶ In the example that follows, for instance, we have a correspondence of five words in Armenian to 13 words in English:

Ուզածն ըսողը չուզածը կը լսէ:

He who says what he wants will hear what he does not want.

This kind of asymmetry in translation shows the challenge of establishing interlinguistic structural regularities.

3. Figures of Speech

As in other languages, Armenian proverbs rely heavily on comparison as a means of figurative expression. Comparisons are made on the basis of one or more characteristic properties shared by the two comparable items. To describe, for instance, two-faced, deceitful, and hypocritical people, an Armenian proverb compares their appearance with a mirror, singling out its bright, straight, and immaculate character, whereas their true nature is compared with a razor and its sharp, stinging and dangerous properties:

Երեսանց հայելի, տակեւանց ածելի:

A mirror on the surface, a razor underneath.

To state that a successful marriage or other lasting relationship needs opposite yet complementary personalities, the judgment is based on the oppositions *loud as a bell* versus *quiet as cotton*:

Մէկը թէ զանգակ է, մէկէլը բամբակ պիտի ըլնի:

If one is a bell, the other should be cotton.

It is remarkable that Armenian, when comparing two items tends to use equative constructions without the comparing particle *պէս* "like." Thus we deal predominantly with "implied similes" (for instance, he is a lion) as opposed to "stated similes" (for instance, he is *like* a lion) as distinguished by Buck (1977:37).

Comparisons can bring together the most unlikely objects. In such cases, an additional statement is given to explain the basis for comparison. For example, to advise daughters who, as married women, should make their visits to the parental home as infrequent and as brief as possible, a proverb compares the parental home with a cold water spring, and gives the motive for the comparison:

Հէրանց տունը սառն աղբիւր է. թանգ-թանգ կու գան,
խմեն՝ գնան:

*Your parent's house is a cold water spring; you go there
rarely, to drink and to leave.*

Consider also the following proverb testifying to the ephemeral quality of wealth, comparing money with dirt that is easily washed away:

Փողը որ կայ, ձեռի կեղտ ա:
Money is dirt on your hands.

In order to clarify the basis for comparison, further explanations are frequently given:

Փողը որ կայ, ձեռի կեղտ ա. լուանաս, կ'երթայ:
Money is dirt on your hands; you wash it, it goes away.

A similar pattern of statement and gloss is observed in the following:

Փորը ու հորը մէկ է. ինչքան ուզես, կը լցուի:
*A belly and a well are the same; you can fill them as much as
you will.*

At times, comparison attains hyperbolic dimensions. A proverb which counsels against going into debt compares this with a young camel, then explains the basis for the comparison:

Պարտքը որ կայ, տաւի (ուղտ) ձագ է. քանի պահես կը
մեծանայ:
*Debt is a camel's young; the longer you keep it, the more it
grows.*

In another, similar proverb, the risk of getting into debt is even more exaggerated by comparing the debt to a flea that grows into a camel:

Պարտքը լուկը դառնայ, տունն կը մտնի, ուղտ կը դառնայ, չի դուրս գալ:

Debt sneaks into a house like a flea, then turns into a camel and never leaves.

Exaggeration can also be intensified by equating two objects or states explicitly and then insisting on the equivalence:

Ելած սիրտը, վարար գետը, մէկ է:

An angry heart and a swollen river are one and the same.

As we see, in order to reach maximum effect through comparison, the two main items in each of these proverbs are made explicitly equivalent; it is as if an equal sign has been placed between them. To make such equations all the more convincing, Armenian uses metaphoric expressions such as "twins," "siblings," "friends," and even "a pair of earrings":

Յաջողութիւնն և ձախորդութիւնն եղբայր են:

Fortune and misfortune are brothers.

Քեարն (չա՛) ու վնասը ընկեր են:

Gain and loss are friends.

Բարեկամ ինծի չօգնող, թշնամի չվնասող, երկուսը զոյգ մը օղ:

A friend who doesn't help me, an enemy who doesn't harm me, are a pair of earrings.

The use of metaphors and similes is paramount in the Armenian distinction between *առած* [aradz] and *ասացուածք* [asatsvadzk], the first denoting figurative and the second literal proverbs.¹⁷ As is the case with other languages (Kokare 1978:26), in Armenian the vast majority of proverbs are used figuratively, while only a very small number are meant to be taken literally.

Here is an example of an *ասացուածք* [asatsvadzk], or literal proverb:

Բարկութեամբ ելնողը վնասով կը նստի:
He who rises up in anger sits down in injury.

In this didactic proverb warning of the perils of a hot temper, the meaning of the proverb corresponds exactly to the meaning of the words contained in it. However, in a parallel *առած* [*aʔadz*], or figurative proverb, the same idea is expressed in a metaphor:

Թունդ քացախը իրա ամանը կը ճաքացնի:
Strong vinegar will crack its own vessel.

In the *առած* [*aʔadz*], words abandon their customary meaning. “Strong vinegar” is made to stand for a hot temper and “vessel” for a person with a hot-tempered nature. Whereas comparison spells out explicitly what is compared with what in an equation formula ($X = [\text{like}] Y$), in metaphor the meaning of one word is simply transferred to another word and made to stand for it. In the second of the two proverbs above an “angry man” and “strong vinegar” share the feature of being sour, caustic, and therefore irritating to others and damaging to himself. Again, as this example readily shows, metaphor in proverbs is always combined with some element of exaggeration.

Some sayings, originally created for literal use, also have the potential to be used figuratively and to apply to various situations. This is how proverbs expand semantically to reach abstraction:

Որ չնմանի, չի խնամի:
If they don't match, they won't make a match.

This proverb, originally employed literally, can now also have figurative meaning and has attained a broad application. When used literally, it is a family proverb, referring to similarity (in character and behavior) between married family members, couples and in-laws. In a wider and metaphoric sense, it applies to any close human association based on similarities.

Perhaps no other literary genre uses metaphorical expression as extensively as the proverb (Fernandez 1986:7), and Armenian

proverbs are no exception. Here too, metaphor is used to simplify, concretize and thus make more complex phenomena accessible to a broader audience. In Armenian proverbs, figures from the animal and plant worlds are particularly popular. Some of them are strikingly recurrent. We will see in the course of this discussion a great host of donkeys, snakes, dogs, cows as well as apricots, roses, poplars, and willows. Each of these figures points to one or more typical aspects of human character. The donkey, for example, is associated with a great number of negative human traits. Hence the many proverbs featuring a donkey as a protagonist who is:

Ignorant:

Էչն ի՛նչ գիտի, նուչն ինչ է:

What does the donkey know of the almond?

Stubborn:

Իչու ինատը (յամառութիւնը) կամրջի վրայ կը բռնէ:

The donkey gets stubborn right in the middle of the bridge.

Lazy:

Խմոր ուտելուց ուղտ ա, բեռ տանելուց՝ աւանակ:

For eating cookies, he's a camel; for carrying a load, he's a donkey.

Without talent:

Իչին ասին, մարիֆաթդ (չնորհք) ի՛նչ ա. պոչը տնկեց ու գոաց:

They asked the donkey, "What is your talent?" He stretched his tail and roared.

Coarse:

Իչի քացուց չեն խոռվի:

Don't take offense at a donkey's kick.

Inept:

Էչն ինքն է, խոտն ուրիշի առաջը կը դնէ:

Being himself a donkey, he puts hay in front of others.

Easily exploited:

Իշին որ խոնարհ տեսնեն, ջուխտ կը նստեն:

When they see the donkey is humble, they ride it two at a time.

Easily victimized:

Ձին ու ջորին կռուան, էշը ոտատակ գնաց:

The horse and the mule fought; the donkey got underfoot.

Vengeful:

էշն իր սատկիւր կ'ուզի, թաք տիրոջը վնաս տայ:

The donkey wants to die, just to spite his master.

These few examples suffice to show how the image of a single animal can be associated with a large variety of traits which can also be attributed to humans. A person possessing such traits is identified with a donkey which appears in these proverbs as the main topic.

Yet another animal with presupposed qualities can be used to comment on the actual, human target of a proverb. This is the snake, a symbol of poison, nastiness, danger and evil. Whereas most donkey proverbs attribute human traits to the donkey itself, the majority of those dealing with the snake do something else. Most frequently, the snake does not stand for the person but, rather, is seen in relation to him. Here the non-human figure, the snake, is restricted to the comment component of the proverb.

Man can be vicious:

Օձին վրայ թքնէ, օձը կը սատկի:

If he spits on a snake, it will die.

Man can be cunning:

Քաղցր լեզուն օձը ծակիցը կը հանի:

A sweet tongue can talk a snake out of its hole.

Man can be desperate:

Մոլին ընկնողը ձեռքը օձին էլ կը գցի:

He who falls into the sea will reach out even for a snake.

A very common construction in Armenian proverbs is the reiteration of the same message by means of two different metaphors in consecutive statements. In order to convey the message, for instance, that "the cause of evil lies in its roots," the following double-image is employed:

Ձուկը գլխէն կը հոտի, ջուրը ակէն կը պղտորի:
A fish rots from the head; water gets muddy at its source.

Or, to express the idea that "work reveals a person's true worth," Armenians use the proverb:

Լաւ եղը թան տակին կ'երեւայ, լաւ կնիկը՝ օրօրոցի:
A good ox shows in the yoke; a good woman, at the cradle.

This type of proverb consists of two statements, each of which in turn can appear as independent proverbs. Taking up the same idea within the same proverbial unit achieves greater forcefulness and urgency. When used together, as a rule, it is the second statement which intensifies the global idea of the proverb, and is also thematically the more relevant one.

Even more impressive are proverbs consisting of three or four such independent statements. Compare the following proverb emphasizing the role of money:

*Ոսկին գէշին կը սիրունացնի, լալին լեզու կը տայ,
 չոլախին ջիւխտ ոտք, քոռին ալ երկու աչք:*

Gold gives beauty to the ugly, speech to the dumb, feet to the crippled, and two eyes to the blind.

Most effective are figurative proverbs with more complicated structures, consisting of two or more complementary metaphors:

*Ուղտին քեանտրպազութիւնը (լարախաղացութիւն) մազէ
 կամուրջին վրայ կ'երեւայ:*

A camel's skill as a tightrope walker is seen when it crosses the hair-bridge.

A popular means of figurative expression is metonymy. This refers to cases when one word is replaced by another based not on similarity but on some logical connection or contiguity. This could be the relationship of a part to whole or vice versa. Consider the use of body parts such as the *eye*, *mouth*, and *belly* standing for the whole person:

Մեռնեմ էն ճպոռոտ աչքերաց, որ իմ հացին կարագ քսի:

I would give my life for those sickly eyes that spread butter on my bread.

[Here *sickly eyes* stand for a person from whom, despite his or her revolting appearance, one can profit.]

Բաց բերանը անօթի չի մնար:

An open mouth won't stay hungry.

Լէն փորիկ, ընկեր է նեղ օրիկ:

The belly that was greedy, soon found itself needy.

Another form of metonymy works in the opposite direction, i.e., the use of the whole to represent the part:

Գեղ կանգնի, գերան կոտորի:

Get the village on its feet, it will smash the log to pieces.

In this text, it is the *village* which represents the people who live there.

Երեք օրուայ վրայ երեքը գիտէ, երեք օրուայ ետէն՝ աշխարհքը գիտէ:

In three days three people will know the news; after three days, the whole world will know.

Here again, it is the word *world* which stands for all the people who know the secret.

As a special form of metaphor, personification appears when features of a person are attributed to something inanimate. This

enables non-persons to cry, walk, be happy, etc.

Ալարողի ապրանքը լաց կ'ըլնի:
The lazy man's goods will cry.

Ստի ոտները կարճ են:
Lies have short legs.

Ծուլութիւն չի գտնի արքայութիւն:
Laziness will never find happiness.

A common instrument for achieving picturesque expression is the use of symbols. Proverbs make use of long-established associations to symbolize specific phenomena. The flower or the swallow are symbols for the arrival of Spring, the devil for evil, a handful of earth for death, the serpent for an enemy, the Sun for beauty, the pillar for the elderly, etc. Consider:

Մի ծաղկով գարուն չի գայ:
One flower doesn't bring the Spring.

Մարդու աչքը մի բուռ հողով կը կշտանայ:
Merely a handful of earth will fill up one's eyes.
[i.e., One ceases to be greedy when he dies.]

Մի օձ, որ ինձ չի կծի, թող հազար տարի ապրի:
Let the serpent that doesn't bite me live for a thousand years.

As mentioned above, a very common vehicle of figurative expression in Armenian proverbs is hyperbole. Phenomena or things can be quantitatively exaggerated in order to produce a strong impression. Exaggeration can entail either overestimation or underestimation. Most of the time things are amplified to unrealistic dimensions. To describe a very stingy person, Armenians say:

Լուից եղ հանող ա:
He would squeeze fat out of a flea.

In a proverb cautioning against wastefulness, exaggeration can go as far as:

Տալով, տալով ծովն էլ կը ցամքի:
By giving and giving even the ocean can run dry.

Quite commonly, one proverb will quote two extreme opposites. To indicate, for example, that somebody is exaggerating, they say:

Լուից տաւա կը շինէ:
He is making a camel out of a flea.

As part of hyperbolic expression, numbers are widely employed. Very recurrent items in Armenian proverbs are the numbers *three, seven, ten, forty, one hundred*, and *one thousand*. Whereas some numbers, such as *three, seven*, and *forty* draw additional power from ritual associations, *one hundred* and *one thousand* serve exclusively for hyperbolic expression.

In Armenian folklore, seven is the preferred number for describing a pattern of frequent occurrence.

Մինչեւ եօթ դուռ չծեծես, մէկը չի բացուի:
You must knock on seven doors before one opens.

Շողոքորթ գառը օխտը մար կը ծծի:
A two-faced lamb would suck seven ewes.

As these examples show, most of the time numbers are used to magnify things. A stingy person is hyperbolically described as overexerting himself or herself before spending a single penny:

Կոպեկի վրայ քառսուն հանդոյց կը գցի:
For a penny, he would turn forty somersaults.

Larger numbers are set against one or two to create opposite poles:

Քառասուն գող մի չպլաղի (մերկ) չեն կարացել թալանել:
Forty thieves couldn't rob a naked man.

Մի' ունեցիր հարիւր դահեկան, ունեցի՛ր երկու բարեկամ:
Do not have a hundred piasters, have two friends.*

An even more extreme polarity is achieved with the number thousand. To describe, for instance, how people prefer the company of their intellectual peers, the proverb maintains:

Գժի համար մի գիժը լաւ ա, քանց թէ հազար խելօքը:
For a fool, another fool is better than a thousand wise men.

The proverbial “stock” of a language can include over- and under-representation. One message can be conveyed by a number of metaphoric expressions in a given language (as in the case of the message “good and bad come together,” to be discussed below, pp. 62-63, in Armenian). Alternatively, in another language, the same message can be expressed by only one, or zero proverbial units. In fact, the quantitative “availability” of proverbial alternatives or duplication is an important means for establishing the origin—indigenous or borrowed—of a given proverb in a given language (Kokare 1978:33).

4. The Translation

Translating folk genres in general and particularly a proverb from one language to another has always been a difficult chore. In order to give new life to the source-proverb in the target language, the ambitious translator has to keep its content as intact and its form as "natural" as possible. Convention has held that when translating a proverb, it is always best to give the equivalent, if any, in the target language. Unfortunately, this has often resulted in robbing the original of its flavor. In order to pass on the distinct national character of Armenian proverbs, I have chosen to translate them as literally as possible, trying to preserve the original figures of speech. My English readers will, I hope, enjoy supplying for themselves the English equivalent where applicable.

To convey the message "good and bad come together" Armenian has several proverbs with different metaphors,¹⁸ each of which requires separate translation:

Առանց փուշի վարդ չկայ:
There are no roses without thorns.

Միսն անոսկոր չի լինի:
There is no meat without bones.

Ձուկն առանց փուշի չի լինի:
Fish do not come without bones.

Ամէն չամիչ կոթ մը ունի:
Every raisin has a stem.

Որտեղ տանձ կայ, պոչը հետն է:
Where there's a pear, there's a stem.

Տանձը կոթ ունի, մարդը՝ պակասութիւն:
Pears have stems, people - faults.

Անփոռ (անթերի) լուսնեակն էլ չէ:
Even the moon is not without spots.

The variety of metaphors and similes illustrated above is not to be confused with cases when a proverb is presented in different linguistic versions retaining the same imagery. While the form of a proverb is by definition fixed, it does not presuppose "total immutability" (Norrick 1984:44). It also possesses the potential of "limited restructuring and variation" (Barley 1972:741) in syntax and vocabulary, and in some cases, the ability to communicate its message by simple allusion to a particular proverb (Mieder 1993:8).

In Armenian, too, a single proverb can function with slight lexical or grammatical variations. In the examples that follow, the core message concerns social injustice:

a) *Շատ դատողին, շալէ շապիկ, քիչ դատողին, շաբէ շապիկ:*

For hard work a woolen shirt, for easy work a silk shirt.

b) *Շատ դատողին, շալէ շապիկ, քիչ դատողին, չիլայ շապիկ:*

For hard work a woolen shirt, for easy work a linen shirt.

չ) *Շատ անողին, շալ շապիկ, քիչ անողին, ալ շապիկ:*

For a lot of work a woolen shirt, for a little work a scarlet shirt.

d) *Շատ դատողին, շալ շապիկ, քիչ դատողին, դառ շապիկ:*

For hard work a woolen shirt, for easy work a gold-stitched shirt.

e) *Շատ մանողին, շալ շապիկ, քիչ մանողին, մոլ շապիկ:*

For a lot of weaving a woolen shirt, for a little weaving a purple shirt.

And finally, the same message expressed literally:

f) Շատ դատողին քիչն է պաշար:
For the hard worker a small share.

In such cases, I have chosen to include in my corpus only one, the most common version.

Translation difficulties were encountered on all levels of the language: the grammatical, the lexical, the stylistic, etc.

In order to overcome asymmetries on the stylistic level, I chose for the English translation the same middle tone of everyday speech that most English proverbs convey to the native speaker.

To deal with discrepancies on the grammatical level, many adjustments were inevitable. Replacing singular with plural and vice versa, past tense with present and vice versa, first person with third and vice versa were always on the agenda. One grammatical difference which had to be constantly accommodated was gender. In Armenian grammar, gender is unmarked, i.e., there is no expressed grammatical distinction for masculine, feminine or neuter gender as in many European languages, for instance in English "he/she/it," "his/her/its," or "him/her/it." In addition, personal pronouns are seldom used with finite verbs since the endings in the conjugation paradigm already indicate if one is dealing with the first, second or third person, singular or plural. Therefore, in the translation of proverbs into English, all verbal forms for the third person singular had to be rendered either with an impersonal "you," or "they," or with an inclusive "he," "his," or "him" to avoid awkward "he/she," "his/her," or "him/her" combinations in the proverbs. In cases where the gender was determined by context, it was possible to use "he," "she," or "it."¹⁹

On the lexical level, translation difficulties arose because of differences in the Armenian and English vocabularies reflecting two distinct socio-cultural backgrounds. As discussed in Koller (1979), there is not always a one-to-one correspondence between words to be translated from a source language to a target language; there can be a one-to-two, one-to-three, etc. correspondence as well. While words for *rose*, *raisin*, *moon*, and so on, are easily rendered from Armenian into English, as we saw above, many other proverb items defy literal translation. Language-specific differences in kinship terminology can illustrate this problem. In Armenian, for instance, the English *mother-in-law*, corresponds to two words, one for each branch of the

family ("wife's mother" or "husband's mother," see p. 125). The same holds true for *father-in-law* and many in-laws on the vertical and horizontal levels. On the other hand, English itself makes distinctions unavailable in Armenian. Հարս [hars] for example, can be rendered into English as either *daughter-in-law* or *sister-in-law* and even designates *bride*, a young bride in general or particularly a bride on her wedding day. This is an obvious Armenian-English one-to-three correspondence. Once again, the challenge to the translator is considerable. Even more troublesome are English-Armenian one-to-four correspondences encountered when *aunts* and *uncles* must be specified as paternal or maternal siblings as well as their spouses. Such problems can only be resolved by indicating the relationship in brackets, which by no means can convey to the English-speaking reader the connotations associated with each of these kinship terms.

Armenian-English one-to-zero correspondences proved to be the biggest obstacle. In some cases, deficiencies in English were amplified by transferring the Armenian word without change into the English text. Such instances were փիլաւ [pilaf*], թոնիթ [toneer*], դաթաւ [gata*], and other socio-cultural specifics which had to be directly borrowed from Armenian and then explained in the glossary (as presented on p. 473).

A "trap" for the translator was the common word դմակ [dmak* E / tmag W] which is the name for the enormous tail of the sheep most commonly found in Armenia. This species, descendent from wild sheep, is found throughout the desert and semi-desert areas of Asia and North Africa. They are known to endure long periods of heat and drought, as well as scarce vegetation. Most importantly, they are recognized by their immense tails, consisting entirely of fat, with a weight usually ranging from 12 to 30 kg (30 to 74 lb).²⁰ Due to the amount of lard, its usefulness and well-liked taste in cooking, as well as its impressive appearance, the *dmak** plays an essential role in Armenia. It belongs to the system of "visual images" which have "symbolic significance" (Dupriez 1991:222) for the people who see them everyday. Hence the frequent appearance of *dmak** in Armenian proverbs. A wide-spread proverb used in many versions is:

Աշխարհքը դժակ է, խելօքը դանակ:

The world is a dmak, the smart person a knife.*

This proverb advises people unambiguously to be efficient, sound and active in life. The existing world is compared to a դժակ [dmak E / tmag W] and people to a դանակ [danak E / tanag W] “knife,”²¹ where the comparison is underscored by the near-rhyme. With this proverb people are advised to go ahead in life, be venturesome, and take advantage of opportunities wherever possible. Another version of the same proverb is even more insistent and forthright:

Աշխարհքը դժակ է, մարդիկը դանակ, հա՛ կտրի, հա՛ ուտի:

The world is a dmak, and people a knife; keep cutting, keep eating!*

Based on the opposition of the metaphors դանակ [danak] “knife” vs. դժակ [dmak] “fat tail,” another proverb portrays the acuteness and suddenness with which sickness arrives, in contrast to its slow and lengthy departure:

Հիւանդութիւնը դանակ-դանակ կու գայ ու դժակ-դժակ կ'երթայ:

Sickness comes like a knife and leaves like a dmak.*

[i.e., heavy and sluggish].

In many other proverbs, the sheep and their heavy tails stand allegorically for people and the burden they have to carry in life. Acceptance of and adjustment to one's destiny is conveyed in the following proverb:

Ոչխարի դժակը իրան բեռ չէ:

The sheep's dmak is not a burden to him.*

In another proverb, self-reliance in coping with life is again described in terms of sheep which must carry heavy tails as their inescapable fate:

Ամէն ոչխար իր դմակը կը կրէ:
Every sheep carries its own dmak.*

The enormous size of this lump of fat dragging behind the animal gives rise to associations, good and bad. Dmak* can be viewed as a means to cover up a blemish:

Հարուստի դմակը մենծ կ'ըլլայ, ամէն պակաս կը ծածկէ:
The dmak of the rich is always big; it covers up all their faults.*

In another instance, the dmak* stands itself for an imperfection which must be hidden. The proverb reprimands arrogant people who criticize others without seeing their own defects:

Դմակաւոր ոչխար ես, քու ետեւը ծածկէ':
Being a sheep with a dmak yourself, you'd better cover your own behind.*

There is a context in which the voluminous dmak* embodies a source of profit:

Մի ձեռով ոչխարին կը կերակրի, միւս ձեռով դմակը կը ստուգի:
With one hand he feeds the sheep; with the other he checks its dmak.*

Being so close to the anus, to some people dmak* can provoke aversion and disgust. To describe a fussy and meticulous character, Armenians say:

Դմակ չ'ուտեր, թէ ոչխարի ետեւին մօտիկ է:
He doesn't eat dmak, saying it's too close to the sheep's behind.*

If this one lexical unit, dmak*, plays in proverbs upon such a vast range of connotations, the reader can imagine the difficulties encountered in the efforts to make Armenian folklore accessible to a

new audience.

One-to-zero correspondences have also been surmounted by various approximations according to the context. Such a word is the Armenian adjective *անտէր* [*anter* E / *ander* W], derived from the noun *տէր* [*ter* E / *der* W], which is a near-equivalent of the English "Lord," "God," "master," "owner," "boss," etc. The noun can also be used metaphorically with the meaning "protector," "guardian," "caretaker," "custodian," etc.²² The adjectival derivation *անտէր* is based on this metaphoric meaning; along with the negating adjectival prefix *ան-* [*an-*], it describes something or somebody who lacks a "protector," "guardian," "caretaker," "custodian," etc., it carries the meanings "protector-less." Given Armenia's harsh climatic, political and economic conditions, an existence without protection from above is dreadful; *անտէր* ("protector-less") people are helpless and destitute and *անտէր* [*anter* E / *ander* W] things are headed for destruction. An essential expression of survivalist mentality, *անտէր* is a high frequency word in colloquial speech and thus in folklore. To curse somebody (seriously or jokingly), they say *անտէր մնաս* [*anter mnas* E / *ander mnas* W], "May you stay unprotected." The noun *տէր* and the adjective *անտէր* have penetrated a great number of proverbs emphasizing the importance of care and protection, even for the dead. Below I cite some of these proverbs to illustrate the lexical-grammatical adjustments that had to be made in order to convey the meaning of the word *անտէր*. In the following examples, I have marked the English words used in translating *անտէր*:

Տէրաւորին տէրն ա տարել, անտէրին՝ գէլը:

The protected is carried off by its master; the unprotected, by the wolf.

Անտէր ժամին (եկեղեցի) սատանէքը տէր կ'ըլնին:

In an abandoned church, devils take over.

Անտէր մալին (ապրանք) տէր շատ կաք:

Unclaimed goods will be claimed by many.

Անտէր գառը, գայլն է կերեր:
The unguarded lamb the wolf will devour.

Մարդասպանի թուրն անտէր կը մնայ:
A killer's sabre will end up losing its master.

Անտէր մեռելը անարտասուք կը թաղուի:
A corpse without relatives will be buried without tears.

Անտէր մայր (ապրանք) եաղին (գիշատիչ) կը տանի:
Unattended goods will be taken away by scavengers.

The variety of solutions for the translation of this one adjective alone shows the demands which are made on the translator in cases of lexical deficiencies in the target language.

A no less serious challenge arises when the main idea of the proverb as a whole is ambivalent and allows for different interpretations.²³ At times, proverbs have more than two or three readings. It is clear that the translator cannot embrace all possible interpretations in one sentence as short as a proverb, and must take some liberty to choose what he or she considers the most common. Such an approach is, of course, not free from bias. Although alternative interpretations have their own validity, the reader will surely understand my constraints. The following example demonstrates one instance of handling ambiguous proverbs in translation:

Տղայ բերելը տղայից է:

Version 1: *It's the man who makes the child.* [Message: Do not blame a woman for not getting pregnant; the man is responsible.]

Version 2: *It's the man who makes the boy.* [Message: Do not blame a woman for not giving birth to a boy; the man is responsible.]

The ambiguity of the proverb derives from the different meanings of the word **տղայ** [*tgha* E / *dgha* W] which in Armenian can indicate:

1. a child of either gender; 2. a boy, or 3. an adult male.

From the two versions mentioned above, my intuition directed me toward the second interpretation. Obviously, this choice reflects the preference for a male offspring in the old-fashioned mentality still common amongst some of my people. The proverb could either reduce the guilt felt by women who give birth to girls, or it could laud men who have sons. Thus, even these relatively simple items can, from the translator's viewpoint, become quite complex.

Notorious stumbling blocks for the translator, prosodic features are the very life-blood of proverbs which, as Jakobson puts it, are the shortest poetic genre (Jakobson:1958).²⁴ Overliteral translation can kill the proverb's display of linguistic ingenuity, just as an overly poetic rendition can be at best artificial, and at worst misunderstood. Nevertheless, if the English-speaking reader is to derive full enjoyment from the Armenian sayings, if they are to be both palatable and memorable, if some of them are to enter into English and be naturalized, and finally, if this collection is to help open Armenian culture to the English-speaking world, some care had to be taken with the packaging—the linguistic presentation of the translations. Hence, no effort has been spared to retain, as far as possible, their rhythm, rhyme and alliteration—in a word, their metric composition. This was a very difficult task, since the preservation of the figurative language in translation was a top priority. Despite this constraint, the Armenian-English correspondences were often astonishingly felicitous. Here are some examples which show how the poetic devices, rhythm and rhyme, have been recast:

Ամէն մարդ իր տունը, հաւերն ալ իրենց բունը:
Everybody in his den, and the hens in their pen.

Հա՛յ կիտի ստակ, բանը կու շինիս իստակ:
Blessed is money, it smooths things like honey.

Եզն աշխատի, ձին ուտի:
The ox does the deed, the horse gets the feed.

Շտապով գնամ, գիժ կ'ասեն, կամաց գնամ, էշ կ'ասեն:
I run in haste, they call me crazy; I walk with ease, they call me lazy [lit.: donkey].

There were lucky instances of word-to-word translations that maintained full rhyme:

Բամբասանք չէ, բանն ասանկ է:
It's not slander, it's just candor.

Even quantitatively longer texts in the translation could preserve the exact meaning and aesthetic nature of the pithier original:

Հոգը քաշողին, լաթը մաշողին:
Worry to those who bear it, clothing to those who wear it.

At times, very insignificant differences of meaning seemed to be justifiable:

Շորերս հին ա, խօսքս անդին ա:
My clothes are old, my words are gold [lit.: priceless].

Անունը կայ, ամանումը չկայ:
The name on display, but nothing on the tray.
 [Note: *կայ* “there is” translated as “on display,” *աման* “plate” translated as “tray.”]

Տուն պոփրոզիկ (փառաւոր), մէջը տկլոզիկ (մերկ):
A dazzling exterior, an empty interior.
 [Note: *տուն* “house” translated as “exterior.”]

Frequently, however, the Armenian text did not lend itself to precise translation and it became imperative to take some greater liberties with the original:

Ուտելուց չորս ձեռնանի կը դառնայ, անելուց կը չոնթանայ:
To eat he is prepared, to work he is impaired.
 [Lit.: To eat he becomes four-handed, to work he becomes lame.]

In this example, due to the absence of adequate equivalences,

the colorful original had to be toned down, with the positive result, however, that a pithier and more poetic proverbial unit was produced in English.

Examples of freer, but still fruitful work, include the following:

Աղուորը սիրուն է, գէշը տիրուն է:

The beautiful you caress, the ugly you possess.

[About a wife]

Բերնէ բերան, կ'ըլլայ գերան:

From mouth to mouth it goes, and on and on it grows.

[About gossip]

In many cases the English translation came up with a better rhyme than the original:

Խոշոր աչքեր լոյս չկայ, գէր-գէր թեւեր ուժ չկայ:

Big eyes and no sight, thick arms and no might.

Բան բանողին բան չատ, պարապ պառկողին, շուք չատ:

For the worker lots of trade, for the loafer lots of shade.

Մարդը մարդով, որդին հօրով:

People need each other, and a son his father.

Ոչխարն վայեց, ապրեցաւ, այծը չվայեց, սատկեցաւ:

The sheep bleated and survived; the goat didn't and it died.

It was especially gratifying when the English translation could include a rhyme or near-rhyme that did not exist in the original:

Սիրտս լէն ա, ձեռն՝ կարծ:

My heart is wide, my hands are tied.

[i.e., I am generous, but I am poor.]

Լաւ տանձը արջն ա ուտում:

It's the bear who eats the good pear.

Շիտակ պատը չի փլչիր:
A straight wall will never fall.

Rhyme or near-rhyme could also be reproduced in texts consisting of three segments where rhyme is crucial for the build-up of tension which leads to a culmination:

Խմիչքին մէկը լաւ է, երկուսը բաւ է, երեքը վատ է:
One drink can cure you, two drinks can cheer you, three drinks can kill you.

Rhyme can be replaced and at times supplemented by other poetic techniques; some of these techniques have been captured in the English translation:²⁵

1. The same endings, but different roots:

Խօսք կայ, բան կը շինէ, խօսք կայ, բան կը քանդէ:
Some words are constructive, some are destructive.

2. Different endings, but the same roots:

Առիւր քանի կեղուես, կը կեղւուի:
The more you peel the onion, the more it peels.

3. Different roots, but rhyming of words within the same statement:

Հանաքը դանակ կը դառնայ:
A joke can turn into a poke.

4. Different words with similar sounding:

Մերացանք, ծէրը (ծայրը) տեսանք:
We reached old age, we saw the edge.

5. Repetition of words:

Դու քեզ մի՛ գովեր, թող ուրիշները գովեն:
Don't praise yourself, let others praise you.

At times, the English translation resulted in homophonous forms not supported by the original text:

Ձեռքդ չհասած տեղը մի՛ երկնցնի:
Don't reach out beyond your reach.

Another poetic device largely used in Armenian proverbs is alliteration. Unlike rhyme which occurs at the end of words; alliteration is the repetition of sounds in initial position. The constraints and limitations tied to the reproduction of this phonetic feature in a translation are obvious. But strange as it may seem, the number of happy solutions surpassed expectations:

Ճանճն ի՞նչ ա, որ ճենճն ի՞նչ լինի:
What is the fly, to fear its filth?

At times, alliteration was simply coincidental, and not backed by the original:

Մայրը տէս, աղջիկն ա՛ն:
See the mother, seize the daughter.

Occasionally, the translation provided alliteration as an additional poetic element to rhyme or near-rhyme in the source language:

Մի օր բարի-բարկենդանք, մի օր անօթի սնդսնդանք:
One day feasting, another day fasting.

Armenian folk poetry offers quite a few instances of “word make-ups” or “nonsense-rhyming.” In many proverbs, some words or word forms are chosen and/or invented for the sake of euphony or rhyme. The proverb above represents such an instance. The original text includes the invented composition *բարի-բարկենդանք*, consisting of the adjective *բարի* “good” or “well” and a conjugated form of a “nonsense-verb” derived from the noun *Բարեկենդան* [*barekendan** E / *paregentan* W]. This non-existent derivation *բարի-բարկենդանք* is used with reference to the great feasts of *Բարեկենդան* [*barekendan** E / *paregentan* W], the Carnival week in Armenia (see pp. 110-111); hence the translation of *բարի-բարկենդանք* as “feasting.”

In other cases, some key words in the original text do not immediately make sense and appear, at least at first glance, as if they were chosen mainly for the sake of rhyming. For example, when insisting that children, however different from their parents, are bound to have some resemblance to them, people say:

Ղաղ մը չքաշի, մաղ մը կը քաշի:

Literally: *If he (the child) doesn't take a goose, he is bound to take a hair.*

In this proverb, the extent to which children can take after their parents is measured by the key words **ղաղ** [*ghaz*] “goose” [meaning: “a lot”] and **մաղ** [*maz*] “hair” [meaning: “a little”]. Given that the verb **քաշել** [*kashel*] used here with the meaning “to take after” could not be rendered fully into English due to contextual restrictions, this proverb would become even less intelligible in a literal translation. In such cases, it was imperative to add a gloss explaining the idea of the proverbial unit and/or to give supplementary information within the proverb, as for instance:

If he (the child) does not take after his parents a lot [i.e. as much as a goose], he is bound to take after them a little [i.e. as much as a hair].

Problematic were also cases when the original contained lexical units invented simply in order to secure alliteration, or created just for the sake of “pleasing the ear.” Such a case occurs in the following proverb where the “nonsense-derivation” **ընտրտոցը** had to be clarified with the more meaningful expression, “to lose your choices.” This decision ensured the rendering of both the didactic content and the euphony of the original:

Շատ մի ընտրի, ընտրտոցը կ'ընկնես:

Don't be too choosy, you will lose your choices.

An especially difficult task is the translation of proverbs whose linguistic effectiveness is founded on the double-meaning of words, i.e., when we deal with puns. Normally, the playfulness of puns is

restricted to the language in which they are created. Although the "decision process" (Levy:1967) for the translation of such proverbs is quite demanding, in some cases the translation rose to the occasion. Compare the following two proverbs:

Ձուկը թողույ (ողուկան) են որսում, մարդը՝ խօսքով:
A fish you catch in a net; a man, in his words.

Խելքը տարիքին մէջ չէ, գլխուն մէջ է:
Brains are not in the age, but in the head.

Another example of an Armenian pun which lent itself to a more or less adequate translation into English is:

Շորն ասաց. - «Դու ինձ պահի պողջամիջին, ես քեզ պահեմ մարդամիջին»:
The clothes²⁶ said, "You keep us in the bundle²⁷, we keep you in the crowd."

The main effect of the above proverb results from the polyfunctional Armenian verb *պահել* whose English counterpart "to keep" allowed the same play on words.

A somewhat more difficult case was the following:

Երես տուինք, աստառ ալ ուզեց:
We gave (him) the face, he's asking for the lining.

This proverb plays on two meanings of the word *երես* "face":

- 1) "face" as visage;
- 2) "face" as the surface of a piece of fabric.

In Armenian there is an idiomatic expression *երես տալ* - literally "to give somebody (a) face (visage)," referring metaphorically to the giving of excessive recognition, attention or freedom to behave as one pleases, hence, to "spoiling." In its first part, the proverb uses the expression *երես տալ* "to give (a) face" without revealing which of the two meanings of *երես* "face" is implied. The

word-play is brought about in the second part of the proverb where the literal meaning “face of fabric” is taken up and contrasted with *սսսսս* “lining.” This word-play alludes to a shameless person who, after getting something undeservedly, looks for more. As can be seen from the translation, although the message of the proverb is well-conveyed, the word-play itself, based on the ambiguity of the word *երես* “face,” has been lost. The reason is simple: there is no corresponding expression *երես տալ* “to give (a) face” as “to spoil” in English.

There were other instances when English allowed for word-play only by providing English substitutions for Armenian key words so that equivalent puns could be recreated in the translation:

Լաւ է մարդու աչքն ելնէ, քան անունը:

It's better to lose your eye than your good name.

[Lit.: Better your eye comes out than your name.]

In the first half of the proverb the verb *ելնել* “to come out” is used in its literal meaning: *աչքն ելնէ* “one’s eye comes out,” whereas in the second part the figurative meaning of the same verb is realized in the idiomatic expression: *անունը ելնէ* literally: “one’s name comes out,” for “being defamed,” “slandered” or “libeled.” Since English does not provide a basis for a literal translation, an equivalent word-play was recreated by introducing the English verb “to lose” for the Armenian verb *ելնել* “to come out.” Thus both collocations were available: “to lose your eye” vs. “to lose your good name.”

A similar compromise had to be made in the translation of the following proverb:

Քարի տակ կը մնայ, խօսքի տակ չի մնար:

He would rather bear rocks than criticism.

[Lit.: He would stay under a stone, but not under words.]

In this unit the pun is based on the ambiguity of the verb *մնալ* “to stay.” In the first half (compare: *Քարի տակ կը մնայ* “He would stay under a stone”) the verb *մնալ* “to stay” is used literally. However, in the second part (compare: *խօսքի տակ չի*

մնալ "he wouldn't stay under words") the verb մնալ "to stay" appears in an idiomatic expression, indicating someone's intolerance to any kind of criticism and his/her readiness to answer back. In order to preserve the pun in English, I took the liberty of using the verb "to bear" to convey the meaning of մնալ "to stay." This resulted in a word play based on the literal and metaphoric meaning of the verb "to bear." Although this choice slightly altered the meaning of the action expressed by the verb in the original, it kept the proverb's message as well as its word-play alive.

In a second, more blunt version of the same proverb, the English verb "to take," allowed a more accurate translation of the Armenian pun:

Քաքի տակ կը մնայ, խօսքի տակ չի մնայ:
He would rather take shit than criticism.

[Lit.: He would stay under shit, but not under words.]

At times, minor adjustments or additions were required in order to maintain the Armenian word-play in the translation. Consider:

Պատից ընկնողը չի մեռնի, հացից ընկնողը կը մեռնի:
Falling from a wall won't kill you, but falling short of food
will.

[Lit.: He who falls from a wall won't die; he who falls from bread will.]

In Armenian, the idiomatic expression հացից ընկնել [lit.: to fall from bread/food] means "to be deprived of bread/food." Since there is no corresponding expression in English, the addition of the word "short" made it possible to preserve the double-meaning of the Armenian verb ընկնել "to fall" in English. As the example above shows, in English "to fall" alone could not provide this ambiguity.

Sometimes a more creative approach was called for in order to preserve the wit of the original:

Ո՛չ մարդանման, ո՛չ մարդահաւան:
He is not like a human, nor does he like any human.

THE TRANSLATION

Although the two compound adjectives *մարդանման* and *մարդահալան* could not be rendered literally into English, the translation presented above made it possible to restore the playfulness of the original, and to create an effective pun in English based on the double meaning of the lexical unit “like.”

Despite the occasional sacrifices, the translations of these types of proverbs managed to capture most of the proverbial wit. Overall, the time and energy spent on decision-making in translation proved worthwhile.

5. The Content and the Origin

The content of some Armenian proverbs may seem familiar to the English reader; there are often equivalent proverbs, sometimes even using the same simile and/or the same syntactic structure. Compare:

Armenian: Հայրն ինչ, որդին նմին-նման:

English: *Like father, like son.*

Armenian: Թագա աւելը լաւ կ'աւլէ:

English: *A new broom sweeps clean.*

Other proverbs existing in both Armenian and English use the same simile, but differ slightly in their content:

Armenian: Ամէն հաւք հետ իր երամի:

Every bird belongs to its flock.

English: *Birds of a feather flock together.*

Most frequently, the same messages are expressed by different metaphors:

Armenian: Մէկ ձեռքով ծափ չի տրուի:

You cannot clap with one hand.

English: *It takes two to tango.*²⁸

There are several reasons for such similarities: day-to-day life poses challenges common to all societies; a basic system of ideas is shared by many cultures, therefore the theory of polygenesis (that expressions of similar content can be coined in different places at different times) is easily applicable here (Mieder 1993:174). Thus proverbs with identical or similar messages can be found in many cultures, close and distant:

Armenian: *Զլացող երեխային կուրծք չեն տար:*
If the baby doesn't cry, it doesn't get nursed.

German: *Hübsch Kind weint nicht, hübsch Kind kriegt nichts.*
If the pretty child won't cry, the pretty child will get nothing.

Armenian: *Ամէն սէւ հագնող տէրտէր չէ:*
Not all who wear black are priests.
French: *L'habit ne fait pas le moine.*

Armenian: *Ֆրսանդը (առիթ) փողով չի առնուի:*
Opportunities cannot be bought with money.
Classical Greek: *Καίρὸν γνῶθαι.*
Know your opportunity.

[Author: Pittacus, one of the seven sages of ancient Greece]

Armenian: *Գայլը բուրդը կը փոխի, բնոյթը չի փոխի:*
A wolf will change his hair, but not his nature.

Modern Greek: *Ὁ λύκος κι ἄν ἐγέρασε κι ἄσπρισε τὸ
μαλλί του, μήτε τὴν γνώμην ἄλλαξε, μήτε τὴν κεφαλὴ του.*

Armenian: *Էլը թիմար անելով ձի չի ըլնի:*
You cannot turn a donkey into a horse by training it.

Bulgarian: *Вари го, печи го, тене се родило, вол ще си умре.*
Cook it, or bake it; it was born as a calf, it will die as an ox.

Armenian: *Մինչեւ խելօքը միտք անի, գիժը տղին կը
պսակի:*
While the wise man thinks it over, the fool marries off his son.

Or:

Մինչեւ խելօքը մտածի, գիժն իր բանը կը տեսնի:
While the wise man reflected, the fool got what he wanted.

Yiddish: *A nar geyt mol dort, vu a kluger geyt nit keyn eyntsig
mol.*

A fool takes two steps where a wise man takes none.

Armenian: Աստուած որ տայ, չի հարցնի թէ ում տղէն էս:
When God gives, he does not ask whose son you are.
Serbian: Каd Бог даје не пита чиј си син.

Armenian: Գլորան քարը չի մամռակալի:
A rolling stone gathers no moss.
Latvian: Akmens, ko daudz vel, neiezel.

Armenian: Ղոնաղը տան տիրոջ էջն ա, (տանտէրը) որտեղ
ուզի կը կապի:
*For the host, a guest is a donkey; he (the host) will tie him up
where he wishes.*

Arabic: Al-zā'ir fī al-hūkm al mūdīf.
The visitor is under the rule of the host.

Armenian: Եղունգ ունիս, գլուխդ քերէ':
If you have nails, scratch your head.
Persian: Kas nakharād pusht-i man juz nākhun-i angusht-i man.
Nobody can scratch my back but my own nail.

Armenian: Հարստութիւնը գէշին (տգեղ) կը սիրունացնի,
լալին համրին լեզու կը տայ, չոլախին (կաղ) ջուխտ ոտք, քոռին
ալ երկու աչք:
*Wealth gives beauty to the ugly, speech to the dumb, feet to
the cripple, and eyes to the blind.*
Chinese: Money hides a thousand deformities.

Armenian: Ծառ չկայ, որ քամի չառնէ:
There is no tree that does not catch the wind.
Japanese: Tall trees catch much wind.

Armenian: Արծիւը ինչքան էլ որ վեր բարձրանայ, վերջը
էլի քարին կը նստի:
However high the eagle flies, he will end up sitting on a stone.
African Proverb (Yoruba): The bird flies high, but always
returns to earth.

In some cases, one language has two, three and more versions in stock, where another may express the same idea once, but in a more condensed way. Here is an example of what seems to be interlinguistic asymmetry between Armenian and Yiddish:

Armenian: Գժի (խենդ) համար ամէն օր նոր տարի ա:
For the fool every day is New Year's Day.

Գժին ամէն օր Զատիկ ա:
For the fool every day is Easter.

Գժի համար ամէն օր հարսանիք ա:
For the fool every day is a wedding day.

Yiddish: *A nar hot a sheyne velt.*
The fool's world is a paradise.

Proverbs with identical and similar content, expressed with and without common similes, can be found in a great number of languages. These are the so called universal or international proverbs, the subject of multilingual proverbial dictionaries and of comparative paremiology. For instance, a proverb underlining the importance of having a trade can be found in many languages:

Armenian: Փեշակն (արհեստ) որ կայ, ոսկէ պիլազուկ
 (ապարանջան) ա:

A trade is a golden bracelet.

English: *A handful of trade is a handful of gold.*

French: *Il n'y a si petit métier qui ne nourisse son maître.*

German: *Handwerk hat goldenen Boden.*

Italian: *Chi ha un mestiere in man, dappertutto trova pan.*

Spanish: *El oficial tiene oficio y al.*

Russian: *Ремесло золотой кормилец.*

Lithuanian: *Remeslas turi aukso dugna.*

Latvian: *Amatam zelta pamats.*

Estonian: *Ametil kuldponi äll.*

Classical Greek: *Τό τέχνιον πᾶσαν γαῖαν τρέφει.*

Hungarian: *A mesterség aranyat ér.*

Turkish: *Sanat altın bileziktir.*

The list could go on. The “international” proverbs tend to dominate the proverbial stock of any language. However, each culture can claim some contribution of its own unique perspective. Armenia is no exception here. As we will see in the pages which follow, many international proverbs are distinguished by features specific to Armenia’s geographical, economic, cultural, and historical identity.

As time-honoured and popular oral expressions, proverbs travel easily between neighboring and even distant communities. Many international proverbs originate from the same source: they can be aphorisms or quotations which may be traced to great thinkers of the past. A quotation originating from Zeno’s explanation for why humans are created with two ears but one mouth (Benfield:1906) became a popular proverb:

Διὰ τοῦτο, εἶπε, δύο ὦτα ἔχουμε, στόμα δέ ἓν, ἵνα πλείω μέν ἀκούωμεν μειόνα δέ λέγουμε.

The reason we have two ears and only one mouth is so that we will hear more and speak less.

The same saying, with better rhyming and some additional didactic content, can be found in Armenian:

Երկու ականջ, մի բերան, իմացիր խօսքիդ սիրան (կարգ):
Two ears and one mouth, don't be a blabbermouth.

[Lit.: Two ears and one mouth, know when it's your turn to speak.]

A Latin saying linking mercantilism to deception is attributed to Cicero:

Nihil mercatores enim profitantur, nisi admodum mentiantur.

Armenian offers the same saying in a more pictorial style:

Պազարում ապրանքի հետ հոգի էլ է ծախուում:
At the bazaar, along with goods they also sell souls.

In a milder tone Germans say:

Krämer lügen gern.

Merchants like to lie.

Russians have a justification for it:

Не солгать, так и не продать.

If you don't lie, you don't sell.

Some proverbs achieve popularity through anecdotes associated with famous historical figures. There is an ancient fisherman's saying which refers to luck coming to those at sea during the night while they are asleep:

Rete dormientis trahit.

Εύδοντι κύρτος αἶρει.

'Tis the sleeper's weel that catches.

According to W. Francis H. King (1904:A), this saying became especially popular in the time of Louis XI, who gave a "benefice" to a sleeping clerk in order to confirm the newer version of this proverb, which said:

French: *A aucuns les biens viennent en dormant.*

English: *Good fortune comes to some people while they are asleep.*

The same proverb is very popular in Armenian:

Ինքը քուն, բախտն արթուն:

He is asleep, his luck is awake.

Many proverbs can be derived from ancient literature, such as the Bible:

Երանի՜ տուողաց, ո՛չ առնողաց:

It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Some Armenian proverbial expressions have identical equivalents in the Talmud:

Armenian: *Երկու շուն մի ասլան (առիւծ) կը խեղդի:*
 Hebrew: *Two dogs will kill a lion.*²⁹

There is another category of proverbs, the so-called loan-proverbs, which come about through direct contact with other cultures, be they neighbors, rulers, or trading partners. Proverbs are easily borrowed, adopted, and assimilated. Being popular expressions handed down from mouth to mouth, it is often impossible to trace back their exact origin (see particularly, Kuusi 1957:47; Kokare 1978; Mieder 1993:174). This problem is also addressed in an ethnographic work (Orbeli:1982) which discusses the dialect, as well as the folklore and life style of Moks, a region to the southwest of Lake Van, presently in Eastern Turkey. Originally, this was Armenian territory with a considerable Kurdish population; it was here that the ethnographer Orbeli conducted his survey in the years 1911-1912. Among other similarities in folklore, the author points to parallels between Armenian and Kurdish proverbs, and the difficulty in pinpointing their exact origin. (Orbeli 1982:132).

Many cultures living in and around Armenia throughout its long history have obviously influenced the Armenian oral tradition. Some popular Armenian proverbs can be immediately recognized as originating from another language, such as Turkish, Russian, Georgian, Azerbaidjani, Persian, Kurdish, and others. A significant clue in determining the language of origin is the vocabulary used, as well as the items discussed in the text of the proverbs.

There are many proverbs in Armenian borrowed from Russian:

Armenian: *Թագաւորը հեռու է, Աստուած բարձր:*
The King is far, God is high.

As Ghanalanian (1960) reports, this proverb referring to the helplessness of ordinary people is relatively new to Armenian. A comparison with the Russian equivalent gives clues as to the origin:

Царь далеко, Бог высоко.

It is the conciseness, the neatness and the rhyme of the Russian

text, as well as the use of the word Царь "Tsar," (the Russian monarch) which suggests that the Armenian proverb has been borrowed from Russian.

A more striking example of a loan-proverb from Russian is the following:

Թուլա գնացողը սամովարը հետը չի տանի:

He who goes to Tula does not take a samovar along.*

This proverb which warns against unnecessary and senseless effort, contains two typical Russian items: the name of the Russian city Tula and of the typically Russian teaboiler samovar*. Tula is well-known for the production of the best samovars. Obviously, this proverb goes back to the original Russian: *В Тулу с самоваром не ездят.*

Another proverb of Russian provenance is:

Մեր փողոցումն էլ տոն կը լինի:

There will be festivities in our street, too.

[i.e., We too, one day will have happy occasions to celebrate.]

Originating from Russia's remote pagan past (Ghanalanian 1960:XLII), this proverb is very much alive in Russia today. Its text can be traced back to contests which included fist fighting and other competitions of a physical nature between people of opposing quarters ("streets") during the harvest festivals. The victorious "street" would celebrate while people of the defeated quarter would console themselves with the sentence: *Будет и на нашей улице праздник.* The Armenian literal translation of this proverb came into circulation relatively recently³⁰ and is not very popular. However, a fascinating phenomenon has occurred right before our eyes, as it were: Armenians have created two analogous proverbs which preserve the message, slightly paraphrasing the content. In both, the occasion for celebration has been changed. One of the Armenian versions says:

Մեր բակումն էլ հարսնիք կը լինի:

There will be a wedding in our backyard, too.

Weddings are important occasions for celebration, and in provincial and rural areas of Armenia they are often held in backyards. The second Armenian version of this proverb is:

Մեր պալքոնի տակ էլ պարաւ (տողանցք) կը լինի:
There will be a parade under our balcony, too.

In this version, reference is made to celebrations in the Armenian urban life-style in the Soviet period, namely the May 1 and November 7 (October Revolution) parades, when city streets saw festivities and revelry of a high order. We see then how borrowed proverbs undergo not only linguistic variation, but also adjustments to their new socio-cultural environment.

Armenians have a long history of peaceful cohabitation with their immediate Christian neighbors, the Georgians. Since the 5th century A.D., many generations of Armenians have made their homes on Georgian territory. This interaction has led to borrowings at every level of oral tradition, vocabulary in general and proverbial expressions in particular. Consider the following proverb:

Մամի ուղիարը վորդուն (որդի) կը հասնի:
The father's unjust actions will pass on to the son.

This proverb is coined in the Armenian dialect of Tbilissi. In addition to the phonetic and morphological markers indicating this dialect, the proverb features two Georgian words: "mama" (father) and "oudiar" (injustice). In other words, this proverb represents a partial translation of the Georgian text: *Mamis oudiari shvilsa dajemarteba* (Ghanalanian 1960:XLI).

What is remarkable here is that these Georgian words have penetrated Armenian folklore, but have no independent usage beyond the proverb itself. This phenomenon can be observed in proverbs borrowed from other adjacent societies as well.

Azerbaijan is another neighbor of Armenia. Populations of both countries have shared for centuries not only common territories, but also languages.³¹ Hence the flow of proverbial expression from one language to the other. Consider the following:

Պիր ըլի ու փիր ըլի:

Let it be one, but let it be a good one.

This saying, which insists on giving preference to quality over quantity, is a mixture of Azerbaijani and Armenian words in equal proportions. A closer look at the Azerbaijani original *Bir olsun, pir olsun* shows that not only the two rhyming Azerbaijani words *bir* (one) and *pir* (good, fine, fun), but also the entire composition, based on parallelism, has been preserved in the Armenian “translation.”

More intriguing are cases of incidental loan-structures captured in a given proverb, which otherwise do not exist in Armenian dialects. Consider the following Armenian dramatized proverb (see pp. 34-36) in which the second of the two turns is entirely in Azerbaijani:

Կատուին հարցուցին. «Մայրդ է լաւ, թէ՞ հայրդ?» Ըսաւ. «Նա՛օ, նա՛օ»:

They asked the cat, “Who is better, your father, or your mother?” It said, “Neither he nor she.”

Note here that the Azerbaijani elliptic sentence «Նա՛օ, նա՛օ» [na o, na o] “Neither he nor she” represents a pun, since, along with its actual meaning (i.e., “neither he nor she”), it imitates the sound of a cat. The saying refers to a choice between two equally worthless options.

The borrowing of words, along with whole structures, can go as far as absorbing the foreign text as a whole. This is seen in a very common “Armenian” proverb, which declares *availability* to be a top priority:

Նաղտ օլտուն, սօան օլտուն:

Let it be on hand, even if it's an onion.

Another, very remarkable text is the following:

Իլաճ եօք տըր, խօրօչօ:

If there is no (other) solution, you accept it.

[Lit.: If there is no remedy, (say) O.K.]

This saying, advising people to settle for adverse conditions if there is no other alternative, consists entirely of foreign lexical units. It contains three Azerbaidjanian words (*iladj* "remedy," *yok* "no," *dir* "is") and one Russian word (*xopowo* [*khorosho*] "good," "O.K."). This extraordinary example shows just how much close contact with other cultures can influence an oral tradition. It also shows the arbitrariness of the proverb as a linguistic sign: the relationship between its linguistic presentation and its actual meaning is conventional. Once a proverb has been elevated to the status of proverbiality with a certain message, it will function in a language regardless of its linguistic motivation.

Of all the parallels existing between Armenian proverbial lore and that of other cultures, the Turkish element is the most substantial. For centuries, Armenian populations have been living under Turkish rule on both Armenian and Turkish soil. This has resulted in complete bilingualism for many Armenian communities. In some cases, Turkish as the primary language of communication was imposed by force, to the detriment of the Armenian language. It is therefore not surprising that the practice of writing³² or even printing Turkish texts for the Armenian readers with Armenian characters was well established as early as the 17th and 18th centuries (Ter Petrosian 1992:25).³³ The constant cultural interaction explains the extensive use of words of Turkish origin in various Armenian dialects and subsequently in the Armenian literary language. Hence the abundance of Turkish vocabulary in Armenian proverbs, evidenced in the anthology presented in this book. Many Armenian proverbs were partially or completely coined in Turkish. To judge by content, many proverbs could have originated in either community. Turkish vocabulary does not necessarily indicate Turkish provenance.

For instance, a proverb found in Ghanalanian's (1960) collection contains only one Armenian term while the two other terms, are definitely Turkish, lexically and grammatically:

Գինի, էրմենին տինի:

Wine is the Armenian's faith.

Here we have a remarkable case of interlinguistic rhyming or

macaronic rhyme³⁴, whereby the Armenian word գինի [gini E / kini W] "wine" is paired with the Turkish dinî [dini] "faith." This proverb, existing only in this bilingual form, may be interpreted in several ways, depending on the speaker and the situation. It may, for instance, express an Armenian's boast or glorification of wine, it may also indicate a Turkish Muslim's prejudice towards imbibing Christians. Such a wide range of interpretations, at times diametrically opposed to each other, prevents us from determining the genesis of this proverb.

Another proverb which serves both communities is doubtless of Armenian origin, despite being cast entirely in Turkish:

Sırtını kürke, kapını Türke alıştırma.

Don't let your back get used to a fur, nor your door to a Turk.

This obviously anti-Turkish saying is used to caution against the supposed unreliability of Turks as clients or visitors. It is notable that until recent times it was also cited by some Turkish merchants who preferred to deal with Christians.

Still another current proverb suggests that it was common practice for Armenians to coin some of their proverbs also in Turkish:

Ունսւն պիթիթի, տինին պիթիթի:

(Turkish: *Unun bitti, dinin bitti.*)

(When) your flour runs out, your faith runs out.

[Criticizing the lack of ethical principles]

In all likelihood, this proverb goes back to the times when Western missionaries, seeking to convert Armenian Christians from their Apostolic Orthodox faith to Catholicism or Protestantism, would entice the population by distributing flour, rice and other essential foodstuffs. The distinctively Armenian content of this type of proverb suggests that the entirely Turkish wording of a proverb does not necessarily indicate Turkish origin.

There is also, however, indisputable evidence testifying to the fact that a great number of Turkish proverbs have penetrated Armenian folklore. Close contacts between the two communities

inevitably led to strong socio-cultural exchanges, and hence to borrowings on both sides. Many Turkish proverbs used by Armenians have been either rendered ad hoc into Armenian or simply quoted from the Turkish. Turkish sayings are popular to this day among the older generation of Armenians who lived under Turkish rule. The second and third generations, among whom you will find the author of these lines, often inherited these sayings. To name just a few:

Քէօր քէօրէ ճըրթ տէմիչ:
The blind reproach the blind.

Փարայը վէրէն, տիւտիւյիւ չալար:
He who pays the money can blow the horn.

Ճան մալտան թաթըր տըր:
Life [lit.: soul] is sweeter than wealth.

Curiously enough, these Turkish proverbs are also found in an Armenian edition of Turkish proverbs which are printed with Armenian characters.³⁵

It is remarkable that even today when Turkish proverbs are used in an otherwise Armenian discourse, it is quite common to cite an introductory formula in Armenian such as: "*As the Turks would say:*" Frequently, these formulas are anti-Turkish: "*Unlike Turks themselves, their sayings are good:*" Or more bluntly: "*Turks are nothing special, but their proverbs are:*"

There is however a trend to "Armenianize" Turkish proverbs partially or totally. The following proverb, functioning in three versions, represents three different phases of such a development:

1) recited entirely in Turkish:

Eşegi eşegin yanına bağlarsan, ya tüyünden alır, ya huyundan.
If you put two donkeys together, they will learn from each other.

[Lit.: If you tie one donkey beside another, it will pick up either some of its shag or its habits.]

2) recited with some Turkish wording:

Էշն իշի մօտ կապես, եա խռն կը սովորի, եա խասիաթը:

[Lit.: If you tie one donkey beside another, it will pick up either its manners or its character.]

The second version has deviated slightly from the original: it has kept the Turkish word *huy* [here pronounced: *khoy*] for “character,” but replaces *tüy* “shag” with *խասիաթ* [*khasiat*], the latter being an Armenian regional expression for “character,” originally an Arabic word, but borrowed from Persian. Here, the use of tautology has ensured alliteration.

3) recited in a completely “Armenianized” version:

Էշն իշի մօտ կապես, կամ առոցը կը սովորի, կամ փառոցը:

If you put two donkeys together, they will learn from each other by watching.

In this third variant, the text is entirely Armenian and even has an Armenian rhyme, based however on the nonsense-words (see p. 74) *առոց* [*arots*] and *փառոց* [*parots*]. The message is supported by the original Turkish composition, and thus the “nonsensical” Armenianized version is perfectly intelligible.

A great many Turkish proverbs appearing in several Turkish collections (Haig:1951, Oy:1972, Özdemir:1981, Aksoy:1989, Yurtbaşı:1993) have found their place in Ghanalanian’s authoritative anthology. Following my own language instinct, as well as my knowledge of proverbs in both languages, I am able to identify with some certainty those proverbs borrowed and translated from Turkish. Some of them are identical in their wording:

Turkish: *Ev alma, komşu al.*

Armenian: Տոռն մի՛ գնիր, դրացի գնիր:

Don’t buy a house, buy a neighbor.

Turkish: *Balık başından kokar.*

Armenian: Ձուկը գլխէն կը հոտի:

The fish starts rotting from its head.

Others appear with slight differences in content:

Turkish: *Tencere yuvarlanmış, kapağını bulmuş.*

The pot has rolled away and found its lid.

Armenian: *Գլորաւ խուփը, գտաւ պտուկը:*

The lid has rolled away and found its pot.

Turkish: *Ananın bahtı kızına.*

A mother's fate goes to the daughter.

Armenian: *Մօր բախտ, աղջկայ թախտ:*

A mother's destiny will be the daughter's settee.

For centuries Armenians have shared with Turks similar living conditions, and to a certain extent even customs and mentality; thus some Turkish and/or Azerbaidjanian expressions can fit into the general system of ideas of the Armenian community as a whole. The popularity of these borrowed proverbs attests to this fact. However, when proverbs cross linguistic and cultural boundaries, they develop certain new characteristics as they get absorbed into the stock of a particular community. Therefore, however great the impact of other cultures on the Armenian proverbial arsenal, and however numerous loan-proverbs may be, once incorporated into the Armenian oral tradition, they are no longer to be treated as foreign elements.

The question is now: Which part, if any, of the Armenian proverbial arsenal can be then described as distinctively Armenian? Is it possible to single out the "Armenian-ness" of the Armenian proverb as its crucial component? In the discussions which follow, I will try to delineate some of the particular and distinctive national traits in Armenian proverbs that make them stand out against other, international components. In doing so, I will concentrate on making those distinctive traits accessible to the English-speaking reader.

6. The 'Armenian' Content

Many Armenian proverbs carry features which make them instantly identifiable as authentically Armenian. Even more numerous, however, are proverbs of international or other origin which have been so thoroughly assimilated into the Armenian vernacular that they can and should be treated on a par with indigenous expressions.

Armenian proverbs reflect the history of the people who use them, the centuries of suffering from conquest, invasion, genocide, and natural disasters. This historical dimension is essential to understanding the main ideas expressed in proverbs such as:

Հայի աշխարհ, վայի աշխարհ:
World of Armenians, world of sorrow.

Հայաստան, որբաստան:
Land of Armenians, land of orphans.

Հայու օրորոց կոտորուկ ա:
The cradle of the Armenian is crushed.

Without an appreciation of Armenian history, one can hardly grasp the meaning of the *ղարիպ* [*gharip** E / *gharib* W] or *պանդուխտ* [*pandoukht** E / *bantoukhd* W], the expatriate, a prominent figure in Armenian folklore. Born of the historical destiny of Armenia, the *gharib** was forced to leave his homeland to keep body and soul together abroad. The nostalgia and poignancy cast by the *gharib*'s point of view can be overwhelming:

Ղարիպի հացը լեղի ա, ջուրը աղու:
A gharib's bread is bitter, his water poisonous.*

Ղարիպի ուշքը միշտ ետեւն ա:
A gharib's heart is always back home.*

Ղարիպի հալը ղարիպը կ'իմանա:
Only a gharib knows how a gharib feels.*

Whereas these proverbs refer literally to the devastating events of Armenia's history, to the cruel destiny of her people, others have taken on a figurative meaning. In times of chaos and confusion, Armenians say:

Մայրը դաւակն է ուրացեր:
The mother disclaimed her child.

As Ghanalanian reports, this proverb can be traced back to the tragedy of Persian, Mongol, and other invasions when, as confirmed by historical documents, mothers really had to literally deny the parentage of their children (Ghanalanian 1960:XLIII). They had to refuse to recognize them as their own offspring, to conceal their Armenian heritage in order to save them from execution.

Another proverb is rooted in the same confrontation between Armenians and their foreign invaders:

Աչխատի Խաչիկ, ուտի տաճիկ:
Khachik does the deed, tachik gets the feed.*

The common Armenian male name **Խաչիկ** [*Khachik*], a diminutive of the full name **Խաչատուր** [*Khachatour* E / *Khachadour* W] deriving from Arm. **խաչ** [*khach*] "cross," stands here for the simple Armenian Christian worker, whereas **տաճիկ** [*tachik** E / *dadjig* W] represents the Persian, Arab, Turkish or other foreign exploiter. Today this popular proverb is cited to criticize any kind of human exploitation and any injustice in the sharing of material wealth. The two antonymous and rhyming words, **Խաչիկ** [*Khachik*] and **տաճիկ** [*tachik** E / *dadjig* W], have appeared in many other proverbs. Consider another saying set against discrimination:

Ինչ կ'ուտի տաճիկը, թող ուտի Խաչիկը:

Whatever the tachik eats, Khachik should eat as well.*

A proverb observing that prosperity and misery can change places in this world, features the name of the legendary Armenian city Ani, the capital of the Royal House of Bagrat (10th-11th centuries). Ani, known for its great medieval architecture and particularly as "the city of 1001 churches," (Chahin 1987:268) was destroyed and abandoned in the 14th-15th centuries as a result of an earthquake, according to some sources, and/or Tatar invasions, according to others.

Անին չէն, աշխարհն աւեր. Անին աւեր, աշխարհը չէն:

When Ani was prosperous, the world was a desert; now Ani is a desert, the world is prosperous.

Yet another uniquely Armenian proverb refers to the same legendary city Ani. It harkens back to historical events at the Royal House of Bagrat in the 11th century:

Վա՛յ քեզ քաղաք, թագաւորդ մանուկ է:

I pity you, city, your king is a child!

This proverb was coined with reference to the reign of King Gagik II Bagratuni (1042-1045), the last of the Bagratids, who was coronated at the young age of 16. Today existing in a variety of versions with different wording, this high-frequency proverb is used to express skepticism when a person assumes undeserved authority. Here are two examples of this variety:

Վա՛յ քեզ քաղաք, դատաւորդ մանուկ է:

I pity you, city, your judge is a child.

Վա՛յ քեզի գեղ, որ ջոջդ Սամոն է:

I pity you, village, your chief is Samo.

[“Samo,” a male name, evidently refers to a minor official.]

Armenia's long history of predominantly rural settlement has saturated her proverbs with rustic themes and imagery harking back to a centuries-long feudal-patriarchal order. This can be a stumbling block to any reader, even of Armenian background, who has not experienced life in the Armenian countryside. Proverbs teem with ancient agricultural tools and their parts such as the *արօր* [*aror**] or "plough" and the *մած* [*mach**] or "helm" of an *aror**, and other implements no longer in use:

Ձեռքը մածին դնողը էլ ետեւ չի նայի, թէ չէ՝ կամ եղբ
ծուռը կը տանի, կամ արօրը կ'առնի քարին:

He who takes the mach of the aror* should not look back; otherwise the ox will leave the furrow, or the aror will hit stone.*

Proverbs offer us a veritable landscape of Armenian tradition. As in so many other cultures, Armenian proverbs abound in references to beasts of burden. Here, too, we find stereotypes and hierarchies of usefulness:

Բուդէն (ցուր) նախրի կէսն ա:
The bull is half the herd.

Էծը քեասիպի կովն է:
The goat is a poor man's cow.

Importance and usefulness are not sentimental values; rather they are measured on the very practical scale of what it takes to survive under harsh climatic, and often precarious social or political conditions.

Կինս կու տամ, ջորիս չեմ տա:
I would give away my wife, but not my mule.

Other images concern the geography of Armenia, its natural resources, its flora and fauna. Armenia is known for its rocky landscape, and its topographical extremes of mountains and valleys:

Սարը պիտի փլչի, որ ձորը լցուի:

The mountain should come down, for the valley to be filled.

Wherever one looks in the Armenian landscape, one finds dry soil, clay, and stones. Hence, the tremendous number of proverbs containing the word "stone" which can only be understood with these natural conditions in mind:

Հայաստան, քարաստան:

Armenia, land of stones.

There are proverbs of all thematic groups featuring stones, both as a nuisance and as useful construction material. Given this generous range of connotation, stones lend themselves readily to figurative expression. Throughout the ages, Armenian architecture has relied on various kinds of stones and particularly on the volcanic stone տուֆ [touf* E / douf W]. Stones have served as the basis for many an architectural and sculptural masterpiece. Hence, the metaphoric use of carved stones for valuable people and objects:

Տաշած քարը գետինը չի մնալ:

A polished stone won't remain on the ground.

Although blessed with rivers such as the Arax and its tributaries, Armenia perennially lacks water for irrigation:

Աղբիւրները չնորցած՝ ջրի արժէքը չի գիտցուիր:

You never appreciate the water till the well runs dry.

In stony and rocky soil, water is always scarce. Irrigation brooks and rills play an immense role in agricultural life and they are a recurrent item in proverbs:

Մեր առուումը ջուր թող գալ, որտեղից ուզու՛մ է գալ:

Let the water fill our rill, let it come from where it will.

As valuable as water and stones may be, however, they represent great danger in natural disasters:

Ջրէն ու քարէն չվախցողը՝ Աստուծոյն չի վախնար:
He who does not fear water and stone, does not fear God.

The Armenian landscape has bestowed upon proverbs a preference for certain varieties of trees. Among them we find the poplar, the willow, the stone pine, and many others. Proverbs tend to focus on specific features of these trees. Visual impressions, especially their silhouette, are particularly important. The towering poplar stands for the tall, straight, and proud person. It cannot be bent. It stands also for anything undestructable:

Բարդին կռացնես, քեզ վրայ կ'ընկնի:
If you bend a poplar, it will fall on you.

Unlike the poplar, the willow is pliant and yielding. Hence the saying:

Աշխարհը ուռենու ճիւղ չի. չես կարող ուռ ընել, մէջքդ փաթթել:
The world is not a willow branch; you cannot wrap it around you.

Trees can also symbolize feelings. While the upright and lofty poplar stands for openness, happiness and joy, the willow, with its bending and drooping branches, expresses grief, sorrow and mourning:

Բարդի ծառը կ'երթայ-կու գայ՝ սիրոյ տէր ի. ուռի ծառը կ'երթայ-կու գայ՝ տարտի տէր ի:
The poplar sways from side to side, love has gripped it; the willow sways from side to side, grief has gripped it.

Due to the uniqueness of the majestic stone pine, Armenians use it to single out exceptional people:

Ամէն ծառ չամի (սոճի) չի լինի:
Not every tree can call itself a stone pine.

THE 'ARMENIAN' CONTENT

Another proverb on outstanding talents compares the unique individual with Armenia's most beloved landmark, Mt. Ararat, called by Armenians also *Մասիս* [Masis]:

Ամէն փէտ (փայտ) չերեփ չի լինի, ամէն սար՝ Մասիս:

Not every wood can make a ladle, not every mountain can make a Masis.

This survey is but a modest attempt to give the reader a glimpse into the wealth and special flavor of proverbs that Armenia can indisputably claim as her own.

In what follows, I shall point to some economic, historical and socio-cultural factors which are reflected in the content and hence the vocabulary of certain Armenian proverbs. I shall elaborate on three topics: Food and Eating Patterns, Human Relations in the Family, and Folk Beliefs.

6.1 Food and Eating Patterns

Armenian proverbs give a comprehensive picture of the nature and originality of Armenian cuisine, of the paraphernalia and preparation of national dishes which, in turn, show considerable influence from neighboring cultures, such as Iranian, Georgian, Russian, and Turkish. The latter is especially prominent, evidenced by culinary terminology in particular.³⁶

Proverbs describe eating patterns and culinary arts which have existed for centuries and, on the whole, have changed little despite rapid technological advances in the modern age. It is obvious that translating the terminology for dishes and their ingredients, as well as the names of distinct utensils and equipment used in their preparation, presented quite a challenge. Where necessary, explanations or special notes have been added, as, for example, in the case of the widely-used word *թոնիր* [*toneer**]. This is a conical fire pit, built out of *touf**, used in the preparation of the Armenian national bread *լավաշ* [*lavash**] and of other meals. The *toneer** is still found in its original form in many rural Armenian households. While Armenian possesses the equivalent of the international proverb *Strike while the iron is hot*, it also contains a “national” variant:

Թոնիրը տաք-տաք լավաշը կողը կը տան:

Slap the lavash on the sides of the toneer* while it is hot.*

[*Lavash** dough is rolled out and pressed against the hot walls of the *toneer**.]

As parts of an important device for processing grain, the names of two items feature prominently in Armenian proverbs. These are the *սանդ* [*sand**], a round bowl of stone with a hole carved in the middle, and the *վարսանդ* [*varsang**], a stone shaft, used to peel, crack or grind grain. This ancient device, going back to neolithic times, can still be seen today in rural Armenian households. Later

versions of these items are made of wood or metal and are widely used in rural areas even today to pound salt, sugar or other foodstuffs. Being an integral part of everyday life, the names of these utensils give rise to various relevant notions. For instance, to hold these items means to be in charge, to carry authority. To describe an authority which is hard to defy, people say:

Սանդն էլ ա իրեն ձեռին, վարսանդն էլ:
Both the sand and the varsang* are in his hands.*

*Sand** and *varsang** are also associated with monotonous repetition. Repetitive actions do not always lead to results. Hence, to expose a speech as empty and useless, people say:

Ջուրը դրել են սանդի մէջ ծեծում են:
They put water in the sand and keep pounding it.*

To stress that things remain unchanged, Armenians say:

Էլի էն սանդն է, էլի էն վարսանդը:
It's the same sand, the same varsang*.*

Although these proverbs do not reflect eating patterns, they do indicate the importance that certain utensils or tools used in food preparation have had in people's lives.

Foodstuffs in their variety and distribution can be seen as codes, "bearing messages relative to everyday, social interactions" (Powers/Powers 1984:86). Consider the following proverb where the allocation of food is used to indicate social discrimination towards women in a patriarchal society:

Տանը ուղտ կ'ուտին, հարսին ու աղջկան չի հասնի:
They eat a camel in the house, the daughter-in-law and the daughter won't get any of it.

[“Camel” is used hyperbolically for a great amount of food.]

Another proverb indicates that the consumption of selected foods depends on social class:

Աղքատը որ հաւ կ'ուտէ, եա հաւն է հիւանդ, եա աղքատը:
When a poor man eats a chicken, either he or the chicken is sick.

Proverbs display the particular passion of the Armenian people to eat and to eat well. For that, however, one has to work:

Ով աշխատի, նա կ'ուտի:
He who works will eat.

According to folklore, nurture—in the root sense of supplying food—is more important than nature; what a person eats has more influence on his appearance or personality than genetic disposition:

Բանը ծնունդը չի, բանը սնունդն է:
It's not the breeding, it's the feeding.

The first and most popular food is bread, as evidenced in countless Armenian proverbs. It would seem that the word *հաց* [*hats*] “bread” has a much broader resonance in Armenian than in other Indo-European languages. Bread is an all-encompassing factor in life:

Հաց մարդահան, հաց մարդակորու:
Bread can repair you, bread can impair you.

The preferred variety of bread in Armenia and in some parts of the Armenian Diaspora today is the *լավաշ հաց* [*lavash hats*], a thin, but leavened wheat bread sometimes reaching up to three feet long. As mentioned above, genuine *lavash** should be prepared in a fire-pit built in the ground, the so-called *toneer**. *Հաց* [*hats*] “bread” conveys, first of all, the meaning of the actual foodstuff “bread,” the symbol of homeyness, contentment, and joy. Consider the proverb glorifying the smell of fresh bread, or praising bread as a primary, essential food:

Տաք հացին հոտը դրախտ է հասեր:
(They say that) the smell of fresh bread has risen to paradise.

Proverbs tell us about the different grains which have been used for bread and other basic foodstuffs since ancient times. Here a distinct priority of values and preferences is obvious. Some grains, like wheat, enjoy a better standing than others, like barley. To indicate, for instance, women's important role in the management of a household, Armenians say:

Կնիկ կալ, գարին ցորեն կը դարձնի, կնիկ էլ կալ, ցորենը՝ գարի:

There are wives who turn barley into wheat, and others wheat into barley.

The hierarchy of bread quality follows that of the various grains used in its making, ranging from the lowest ճաթ [*dshat**], the millet bread, the bread once fed to slaves, over the corn and barley bread to the noble wheat bread. To express, for instance, the absurdity of talking to a fool, Armenians say:

Շա գծի հետ խօսել էս, եա քարթու (օթեկ) ճաթ (կորեկի հաց) կերել էս:

It's just the same, talking to a dolt or eating a stale dshat.*

In another proverb, barley bread is used as a symbol for poverty:

Գարի հաց, պարզ էրես:

Barley bread, but a proud face.

The ranking between two sorts of bread is reflected in:

Կորեկի ճաթ ուտողը, գարի հաց էլ կ'ուտի:

He who has eaten dshat of millet will eat barley bread as well.*

Unlike millet and barley bread, wheat bread is the variety of eminence, unattainable for the poor:

Ցորենի հաց չենք կերել, բայց ցորենի յարդի մէջ պառկել ենք:

We haven't eaten bread of wheat, but we have slept in the straw of wheat.

The superiority of wheat bread is emphasized in a dramatized proverb where wheat bread makes fun of the inferior, but boastful barley bread:

Գարի հացը ըսաւ. «Բացուիմ»

Ցորեն հացը ըսաւ. «Շատ մի՛ բացուիր, կը կոտրիս»

The barley bread said, "I will rise open."

The wheat bread said, "Don't open too much, you'll pop."

The word **հաց** [*hats*] "bread" also has the metaphoric, Biblical sense of one's livelihood:

Որտեղ հաց, էնտեղ կաց:

Where your bread is, there you stay.

The sheer effort of earning one's daily bread also forms part of proverb lore. Consider the proverb:

Հացն եղէ ձիաւոր, մենք ոտաւոր, չենք հասնի:

Bread is on horseback and we, on foot, cannot catch it.

However, the semantic volume of the word **հաց** [*hats*] "bread" in Armenian is much greater still. It embraces all nourishment or food available for consumption. In Armenia, up to the present, **հաց ուտել** [*hats outel E*], literally: "to eat bread" means "to have lunch or dinner or a full meal." Similarly, **մեզ հետ հաց կեր** [*mez het hats ker E*], literally: "Eat bread with us," is in Armenia an invitation to join a meal. A comparable expression in English would be "to break bread" with somebody. In the following saying, [*hats*] "bread" stands for food:

Էլի էն սուփրէն, էլի էն հացը:

It's the same tablecloth, the same bread [i.e., food].

Accordingly, **հաց դնել** [*hats dnel E*], literally: "to set bread" means "to set the table." These two expressions alternate in two versions of the same proverb, stressing the importance of feasting:

Սեղան/հաց դրած, բանն անիծած:

The table/bread you set it, the rest, forget it.

Many common combinations incorporating the word *հաց* [hats] “bread” have symbolic meaning.

“Salt and bread” is a symbol of hospitality:

Աղ ու հացը քարն էլ կ'իմանայ:

Even a stone will remember salt and bread.

“Onion and bread” is a symbol of poverty:

Սոխ ու հաց, սիրտդ բաց:

Onion and bread, an open heart.

“Bread and cheese” is a symbol of simple but hearty nourishment:

Աղքատն ունի հաց ու պանիր, գիշերը քունը չի տանիր:

When a poor man has bread and cheese, at night he cannot fall asleep.

[i.e., Out of joy]

“Bread and water” is the minimum for survival:

Հացիկ-ջրիկ, կեանք երջանիկ:

Bread and water, happy life.

“Bread and tan*” is a symbol of hominess and rustic comfort:

Ուր կայ հաց ու թան, սուտ է ամէն բան:

The bread and tan, nothing can overrun.*

“Bread and wine” stands for prosperity:

Հաց ու գինի ունիս, իմ սէրը դուն ես. հաց ու գինի չունիս, իմ դեւը դուն ես:

If you have bread and wine, you are my angel; if you don't, you are my devil.

Proverbs also deal with various grains used in principal dishes.

There is a whole range of cereals resulting from different processing techniques: precooking and drying for *ձավար* [dzavar* E / tsavar W] or *պղղուր* [boulgour*], polishing and cracking for *կորկոտ* [korkot* E / gorgod W] and others.

Rice is the queen of all grains, and is often contrasted to the lowly *boulgour**:

Պղղուրը բրինձ չի լինի:
Boulgour cannot be rice.*

To convey the message that one can lose little things while striving for great ones, Armenians say:

Կերթայ Երեւանէն բրինձ բերելու, կու գայ որ ձավարը տնէն տարեր են:
He goes to Yerevan for rice; back home, his tsavar is stolen.*

Of all foodstuffs, *pilaf** is the most frequently mentioned item in proverbs. *Pilaf** is the term for a dish cooked with rice, melted butter, and water or broth. In a saying which contrasts hollow words with concrete means leading to tangible results, the main ingredients of *pilaf** are introduced:

Խօսքով փիլաւ չի եփուի, իւղ ու բրինձ է հարկաւոր:
You cannot cook pilaf with words; you need butter and rice.*

*Pilaf** enjoys a higher status compared to all other staple foods such as "gruel," the flat grain soup, porridge or even the poor man's stale bread. Consider:

Ապուր կեր, դուռը ել, փիլաւ կեր, լեռը ել:
Soup takes you to the door's sill; pilaf takes you up the hill.*

Իմ ցամաք հացը լաւ է ինձ համար, քանց ձեր մսով փիլաւը:
I'd rather eat my stale bread than your pilaf with meat.*

*Pilaf** with lamb, or *pilaf* with chicken, stand at the very top of the hierarchy, serving invariably as an emblem of great luxury:

Պաննով փիլաւն էլ ամէն օր չի ուտուի:

Even pilaf with lamb you cannot eat every day.*

Պարտքդ որ հազարի հասաւ, ճուտով փիլաւ կեր:

When your debt gets up to a thousand, eat pilaf with chicken.*

[Expressing the cynicism of a lost cause]

A very popular kind of *pilaf** is the one served with *չիր* [*cheer**], dried fruit, namely raisins, dried apricots and prunes, fried in butter:

Զիրով փիլաւ, հոգիս թաւ:

Pilaf with cheer*, my heart will cheer.*

Armenian proverbs discuss a great variety of national foods, such as essential dairy products, which along with bread represent the primary nourishment for many Armenians in rural as well as urban areas. These are *մածուն* [*madzoun**] and *թան* [*tan**], all kinds of cheeses such as *պանիր* [*panir* E / banir W*] and *մոթալ* [*motal**], *ժաժիկ* [*zhazhik**] and other varieties of dairy products.

Armenian proverbs abound with an assortment of special culinary delicacies, such as *պլլոր* [*pllor* E / bllor W*] or *տոլմա* [*dolma**], *կոլոլակ* [*kololak* E*] or *կլոլակ* [*glolag* W*], *քուֆթա* [*koufta**], *հարիսա* [*harissa**], *խորոված* [*khorovadz**], *քէպապ* [*kebob**], *խաշ* [*hash**] or *փաշա* [*pacha**]. Very popular is the cured meat *ապուխտ* [*apoukht* E / aboukhd W*] or *պաստուրմա* [*basturma E / pasturma W*]. Varieties of desserts include *գաթա* [*gata**], *խաւիժ* [*khavits**], *հալվա* [*halva**] and others. Each of these delicacies evokes a complex of sensations and expectations known only to the members of the Armenian community. To render these words into English in a statement as short as a proverb and to preserve their socio-cultural connotations is a difficult task.

*Gata**, for instance, a very common dessert and therefore a frequently used word in proverbs, cannot be translated as "cake,"

“cookie,” or “biscuit” without sacrificing its uniqueness. *Gata** is a combination of shortbread and a filling consisting of butter whipped with sugar and stiffened with flour. Although depending on the region the shapes and sizes as well as the recipe can vary, *gata** is unmistakably recognized as such and no celebration is complete without it. Or, *harissa**, a favorite porridge of cracked wheat and cooked red or white meat, is a distinct dish known not only for its time-consuming ritual of preparation, but also for its association with festive meals. Names of such popular foods are linked to various experiences of life; their connotations go far beyond the mere consumption of the products they name. Therefore, food terms of this importance can be found in any thematic group of proverbs.

Of great ethnographic interest is what proverbs can tell us about eating habits, about the time-hallowed associations of certain foods with certain festive occasions, such as *Զատիկ* [*zatik** E / *zadig* W] “Easter” or *Բարեկենդան* [*barekendan** E / *paregentan* W] “Carnival,” New Year and others.

*Paregentan** was originally a pagan festival, adapted to Christianity; the week before Lent is marked by celebrations, abundant eating and drinking, games, competitions etc. Proverbs can focus on the feasting aspect:

Բարեկենդանի կերակուրը շատ կ'ըլնի:
At *Paregentan**, there's lots of food.

To describe an intrusive, impertinent and thick-skinned person, people say:

Բարեւ տաս, Բարեկենդան կու գայ:
If you greet him, he will visit you at *Paregentan**.

Some particular foods, such as *pilaf** or *gata** are connected with *Paregentan**:

Ան յոյսով մնա', որ Բարեկենդանին փիլաւ պիտի ուտես:
Stay in the hope that at *Paregentan** you will eat *pilaf**.
[Said to people who have unrealistic expectations]

Քանի անօթենայ, Բարեկենդանի գաթէն միտը կ'ընկնի:
Whenever he gets hungry, he recalls the gata of*
Paregentan.*

At Easter, too, there is plenty of eating and drinking. Without some foods like eggs and *halva**, Easter is not Easter:

Կարմիր ձուն Ջատկին կը սաղի:
Red eggs belong to Easter.

Յետ Ջատկին, հալվան էժանադին:
After Easter, the halva is cheap.*

Both holidays, *Ջատիկ* "Easter" and *Բարեկենդան* "Carnival," have come in proverbs to be associated almost entirely with good food. Compare two versions of the same proverb:

Ունեցողի համար ամէն օր Բարեկենդան / Ջատիկ է:
For the wealthy, everyday is Paregentan/Easter.*

Some proverbs tell us about the sizes and shapes of certain foods:

Մարդու համար կէս քուֆթան էլ հերիք է:
For a (normal) person half a koufta is enough.*

In this case a special type of *koufta** (or meatball) is meant - the *Bayazet koufta*, about the size of a coconut, which dwarfs the regular type of meat ball, *glolag**, by virtue of its generous dimensions.

All the delicacies mentioned above are encoded in proverbs as graphic images with a certain value. For example, wherever the word *pilaf** or *gata** appears, it is meant to symbolize something of superior merit. For example, to indicate that God gives to people according to their generosity of spirit and spending, Armenians say:

Աստուած փիլաւ ուտողին փիլաւ կու տայ, ժածիկ
ուտողին՝ ժածիկ:

God gives pilaf to those who eat pilaf, and zhazhik* to those
who eat zhazhik.*

The idea that it is not hard to satisfy the needy is expressed in:

Անօթի մարդուն հացը դաթայ կ'երեւայ:

To the hungry, bread seems like gata.*

In other proverbs describing human characters *pacha** is used
to convey the following message: a miser doesn't deserve good food:

Սոխ ու սխտորը հիսապ (հաշիւ) ընողը փաշա չ'ուտեր:

He who saves on onion and garlic should not eat pacha.*

One has to appease the bad for the sake of the good, the
*khavits**.

Խաւիժի սիրուն տապակի տակն են լիզում:

For the sake of khavits, they lick the bottom of the pan.*

It is better to accept the inferior but familiar *tan**, than to go
after the superior but unknown *madzoun**:

Փորձուած թանը լաւ ա, քանց անփորձ մածունը:

The tasted tan is better than the untasted madzoun*.*

When *harissa**, a delicious meal, is brought out, people stop
talking. To cut a conversation short, they say:

Հարիսէն, կտրէ՛ դսէն:

Harissa, cut it short.*

Some people are freeloaders and enjoy undeservedly the best
things in life:

Մսին փող չի տուել, տոլմի-քուֆթի մենծն ա ուտում:

*He didn't pay a cent for the meat, but he eats the biggest of
the dolma* and koufta*.*

*Kebob** and wine are traditionally served together. To express the idea that brother-in-law and sister-in-law (the wife's sister) are very close, people say:

Փեսայ ու քենի, քեպապ ու դինի:

Brother- and sister-in-law are like kebob and wine.*

Proverbs of ancient origin show that Armenians are also very familiar with various herbs, not only for their curative properties but also as seasonings in salads and main dishes. In fact, the tradition of serving many of these leafy herbs plain as a "finger salad" is still alive in Armenia. Hence the rhetorical question:

Առանց կանաչիի սեղա՞ն կը լինի:

Can there be a meal without herbs?

Herbs feature in figurative proverbs as well. In a unit, stating that innate qualities cannot be changed appears the noble herb *ռեհան* "basil":

Աւշանը ինչքան բեջարես, ռեհան չի դառնայ:

Weeds, tend them as you will, won't become basil.

To show the significance of the origins, people also say:

Թարխունը իր քոքին կը բուսնի:

Tarragon grows from its roots.

On the subject of tenacity and even stubbornness, the proverb observes:

Աղբիւրը գդաղձ չ'ուզեր, կ'երթայ-կուգայ ահը կը բուսնի:

The spring doesn't want the peppermint, but it still keeps growing along its banks.

Proverbs also contain recommendations for the preparation of good food, for instance:

Իշխան ձուկը, Սեւանայ ծովի ջրով:

Ishkhan fish (should be cooked) in the water from Lake Sevan.*

Another proverb suggests the right season for good food:

Գառը գարնանը, հաւը աշնանը:

The lamb in the spring, the chicken in the fall.

We also find warnings against overeating:

Ամէն բանին բարակը կը կտրուի, մարդու՝ հաստը:

Everything breaks when thin, only humans when thick.

Among many names of fruits, the Armenian *ծիրան* [*tsiran* E / *dziran* W] “apricot” enjoys a special popularity. Its botanic name, *prunus armeniaca*, explains why it is so frequently cited. Originating in ancient China, apricot trees later yielded the best fruit in the stony soil and warm, dry climate of Armenia. The tree then spread to Europe through Greece where it had been brought from Armenia by Alexander the Great’s soldiers. Proverbs mentioning this fruit address various themes. To express, for instance, the idea that insignificant causes lead to insignificant consequences, Armenians say:

Ծիրանն ի՛նչ արաւ, կորիզն ի՛նչ անի:

What did the apricot do, to expect anything from the pit?

Or, observing that friendship is often based on personal interest, the proverb states:

Բաղումս ծիրան կայ, բարեւ տալ կայ, բաղումս ծիրան չկայ, բարեւ տալ չկայ:

If there are apricots in my orchard, people greet me; if not, no one greets me.

In another proverb, heredity is explained:

Ծիրանն իր ծառի տակին վէր⁵³ կ’ընկնի:

The apricot falls under its tree.

This proverb is another instance of an international theme expressed with items of national significance. In this case, the internationally more commonly used word *apple* (Compare the international proverb: *The apple falls under its tree.*) is replaced by the more distinctively Armenian word *apricot*.

6.2 Family Proverbs

As in every culture, Armenian proverbs incorporate some of the social prejudices that were once part of the matriarchal and patriarchal world-views. These survive in concepts, convictions, ideas, or attitudes which used to be accepted by members of a social group, imparting to proverbs a certain judgmental character.

Vestiges of these cultural stereotypes run through certain thematic groups of proverbs, particularly those concerning everyday and family life. The so-called "family proverbs" are especially striking in this respect, since Armenian culture is very family-oriented. Marriage is a sacred institution:

Մարդ ու կնկայ գործը երկնքումն է շինուում:
Man and wife are matched in heaven.

Therefore, divorce is dreadful and unacceptable:
Աստուած մահ տայ, բաժան-բաժնու թիւն չտայ:
Better God give us death than divorce.

Second marriages are not to be approved:
Յետին կնիկը կարկաստան է:
A second wife is patchwork.

Patriarchal values predominate in the description of the old-fashioned Armenian family. Under that system, men and women did not enjoy equal rights, since women were considered dependent on husbands, fathers and brothers (Ghanalanian 1960:LXIX). They were underestimated and discriminated against from their earliest days onward. In one proverb, an unknown authority states bluntly:

Տղէն երկու ձեռքով կը բռնեն, աղջիկը՝ մէկ:
A boy you should hold with both hands, a girl with one.

Many family proverbs enshrine scorn, mistrust and abuse of women:

Կնկայ մազը երկար է, խելքը՝ կարճ:
A woman's hair is long, her brain is short.

Ո՛չ կնկան է՛թիպար (վստահութիւն) կայ, ո՛չ ձիուն:
Trust neither women nor horses.

Ով չի ծեծել իր կնկանը, նա վա՛յ կը տայ իր ծնկանը:
He who didn't strike his wife, will strike his knees.
 [Striking one's knees is a gesture of regret.]

At the same time, however, such judgments are counter-balanced by other proverbs:

Առիւծը առիւծ է, էդ լինի թէ որձ:
A lion is a lion, whether male or female.

It was women who made the house a home:
Կնկան չինածը Աստուած չի շիներ:
God can't build what a wife can build.

Proverbs provided rules governing relationships between family members and relatives. They set the standards or ideals by which family members' conduct was to be judged. The generalizations these proverbs make were meant to rule family life from A to Z. Many proverbs incorporate commonplace sayings registering long-lasting prejudices. In this light, family proverbs can begin to sound like statutes in a domestic code of laws. Each of these statutes spells out a detailed distribution of powers and strict regulations of behavior within the micro- and macro-family. Men, for instance, were considered to be heads of the *օջախ* [*odjakh**] "hearth" and bread-winners, whereas women were subordinates, in charge of procreation and homemaking. Therefore male and female activities were restricted to different areas. Men were said to belong to the exterior world, women to the interior:

Տղամարդը որ կայ, դրսի պատ է, կնիկ որ կայ, ներսի պատ է:
The husband is the outside wall, the wife the inside.

Մարդը դուրս, վաստակը ներս:
The husband should be outside, his earnings inside.

The idea is that in a household men and women must complement each other: while the husband works, the wife saves his earnings. This is supported by various similes:

Մարդը սել (հեղեղ) է, կնիկը գէօլ (լիճ) է:
The man is the flood, the woman the lake.

[i.e., The goods brought in by men must be guarded by women.]

Մարդը գետ է, կնիկը անոթ դէմ բանդ (պատնէշ) է:
The man is a river, the wife a dam against it.

However, both husband and wife must work very hard for the household:

Մարդը տան մշակ, կնիկը տան ճախարակ:
The husband is the slave of the house, the wife the spinning wheel.

Giving birth was a woman's primary function. Therefore, she was expected to produce a child in the first year of marriage, otherwise she had to pack and return to her mother's home. Proverbs demand a more reasonable approach:

Մէկ տարուայ ստերճ կովը չեն մորթի:
They don't slaughter a cow that hasn't calved for a year.

Մէկ տարուայ անպտուղութիւնով ծառը չեն կտրի:
You don't chop down a fruitless tree after one year.

Although many of these maxims have lost their importance in modern urbanized regions, they are still very much alive in some rural

families even today. Hence, to many Armenians, as members of a linguistic community, old stereotypes are familiar and meaningful. However, for most English readers, many of these stereotypes are foreign and require explanation. Because translation cannot capture the various presuppositions and assumptions underlying all these subtleties, mini-glosses often had to be added in parentheses for clarification.

There is, for instance, a set of stereotypes connected with the social standing of a young girl. Her utmost ambition was an early and successful marriage.

Աղջիկը ոսկի օրօրոցով հօր տունը չի նստի:

A girl won't stay at her father's house even in a golden cradle.

When they reached their prime, girls were said to get anxious:

Որ պսակուել ուզենայ, աղջիկը տան կճուճներն է ջարդում, տղան՝ օտարութիւն է գնում:

When they are eager to marry, girls break jars, boys go abroad.

The fate of an old maid was considered disastrous and pitied by all:

Պառաւած աղջիկը չատ անբախտ կ'ըլնի:

An unmarried girl is an unhappy girl.

Therefore, girls had to be promoted by everybody in the community:

Զգոված աղջիկը տունն է մնացեր:

If you don't praise a girl, she stays at home.

However, not everybody's, and certainly not her mother's promotion was to be taken at face value:

Մօրը գովածը թո՛ղ ու փախի, դրկիցին գովածը ա՛ռ ու փախի:

What the mother praises, leave and run; what the neighbor praises, take and run.

Defamation of any girl was considered a great sin:

Ժամ (եկեղեցի) քանդելը լաւ է, քանց աղջկայ անուն
կոտորելը:

It's better to destroy a church, than to slander a girl.

What qualities in a girl fetched the highest price? First of all, chastity and bashfulness:

Գինին կ'ընտրեն համով, աղջիկը՝ նամով (պատիւ):

Wine you choose by taste, a girl if she's chaste.

Since shyness is an indication of purity, it was thought to be a sign of virginity:

Ձին ճանչցիր քայլուածքէն, իսկ աղջիկը՝ նայուածքէն:

A horse you know by its gait, and a girl by her gaze.

The loss of this virtue is irreversible:

Աղջիկը որ կայ, շուշա (ապակի) է, որ կոտորուեց, չի
կարկատուի:

A girl is like crystal; if it shatters, it can't be restored.

Another important asset was beauty. From birth, a series of stereotypes concerning beauty made girls' lives difficult. The following conditions were said to constitute a woman's physical perfection. A girl must have white skin:

Աղջկայ մէկ սպիտակութիւնը օխտը այլը (ամօթ) կը
պարտկէ:

The whiteness of a woman's skin covers up seven sins.

Of equal interest is the scatological rejoinder to this stereotype:

Ձիւնն ալ ճերմակ է, ամա շուները վրան կը քաքեն:

The snow is white, too, but dogs shit on it.

As a rule, dark skin in girls was rejected. "Black and yellow" is a pejorative epithet for swarthinness:

Սէւ ու դեղին, ով որ տեսնի, պատռի լեղին:

Black and yellow her face; he who sees her will be frightened to death.

[In Armenian, *պատռի լեղին* “his/her bile will burst” indicates extreme fright.]

However, no matter how beautiful the white-skinned girl, the dark-skinned has an edge:

Սպիտակի տեսքը, սեւի համը:

The glamour of the white, the flavor of the black.

Another beauty stereotype was long, healthy hair:

Աղջկայ լաւ մազն էլ մի աղջիկ արժէ:

A girl's beautiful hair alone is worth one girl.

Another beauty requirement was a buxom figure. Skinny girls were not popular on the “marriage market,” and were sized up according to their potentiality to gain weight after marriage. In such cases, the allegoric proverb provided consolation by hoping for a fatter future:

Զոր փայտը չատ ջուր կը ծծէ:

Dry wood absorbs a lot of water.

Some proverbs, on the other hand, warn that, alas, beauty does not last forever:

Մազն ու միսը կու գան ու կ'երթան:

Hair and flesh come and go.

Ծամովին ծամերը թափաւ, անծամին ծամ եկաւ:

The one who had hair, lost it; the one who didn't, got it.

The next requirement for a girl seeking a husband was the preparation of a substantial dowry. Parents who had girls carried a financial burden, and the mother, the industrious housekeeper, had to economize:

Աղջիկ ունեցող մօր մէկ ձեռքը ծոցը կ'ըլլայ:
A girl's mother has to keep one hand in her purse.
 [Lit.: ... "in her breast," where money was kept.]

Parents of daughters had to be preoccupied with the problem of dowries from day one. The dowry should grow faster than the child:

Աղջիկն օրեկան, բաժինքը տարեկան:
The girl one day old, her dowry one year old.

Inequality of the sexes was cultivated from the cradle: as in so many other cultures, "It's a boy!" was more of an occasion to celebrate than "Better luck next time."

Կինն որ մանչ ծնի, տան պատերն ալ կը խնդան:
When a wife gives birth to a boy, even the walls of the house laugh.

Unlike girls, boys last forever:

Աղջիկը ուրիշի որդի է, տղէն միշտ քուսնն է:
A daughter is somebody else's child, a son is yours for good.

Giving birth to a boy was such an achievement that women who did so were said to belong to a class all their own; they were treasures not to be wasted in marriage to people outside the village or foreigners:

Մանչ բերող աղջկան դուստցի չեն տար:
A girl who gives birth to boys should not be given away to an outsider.

The preference for male over female was so strong, it seems, that it carried over into proverbs that have nothing to do with family matters; here *male* symbolizes *good* and *female*—*second-rate*.

Վազողին (աճապարող) տղայ չի լինի:
He who hurries will never get a son.

Girls are not very welcome since they are said to stand "behind the door," like "guests" in their parents' home:

Աղջիկը դռան ետեւն ա:
A daughter is behind the door.

Աղջիկը միսաճիւր (հիւր) է, ժամանակն եկաւ՝ կ'երթայ:
A daughter is a guest, when the time comes, she leaves.

Therefore, it does not pay to invest too much in them, for when girls leave their parental home they will be re-made:

Աղջիկն որ հարս կ'երթայ, գուլպայի պէս է՝ կը քանդեն նորէն կը գործեն:
When a girl gets married she is treated like a (knitted) sock: they rip her up and knit her all over again.

A married woman's life is presented in proverbs as one of extreme hardship. A young married woman *հարս* [*hars*] is forced to live and work for the whole of her husband's family. However, the bride's plight is not eternal: when her own sons marry, the cycle will repeat itself as she will dominate her daughter(s)-in-law.

Armenian has a very detailed nomenclature of kinship terms. For example, the English *uncle* and *aunt* cannot convey the distinctions of *մօրեղբայր* or *քեռի* "mother's brother," *հօրեղբայր* "father's brother," *մօրաքոյր*, "mother's sister," and *հօրաքոյր* "father's sister." Blood relatives are very close and heredity goes beyond the immediate family. Not just one's own children, but also the children of one's siblings are seen as one's own. People believe that boys take after their maternal uncles and girls take after their paternal aunts:

Տղէն քեռուն կը քաշէ, աղջիկը՝ հօրքուրին:
A boy takes after his (maternal) uncle, a girl after her (paternal) aunt.

This assumption about blood heritage is carried over to the principles of material heritage:

Քեռուն մայր եկեանին (քրոջորդի) ա:

The (maternal) uncle's wealth belongs to his nephew.

In contrast to the debt these proverbs clearly owe to matriarchal views, others lean more toward a patriarchal structure. Compare a proverb where the nephew pays homage to his paternal aunt:

Աղբօր տղին իշխանութիւն տուին, առաջ իր մամիթին
(հօրաքոյր) իշի վրայ նստեցուց:

They put the nephew in charge; he seated his (paternal) aunt on the donkey first.

Blood ties are very clearly marked off from those of marriage. On the vertical as well as horizontal axis there is an entire nomenclature for each of the members of the extended or macro-family. What is called a brother-in-law in English can be in Armenian a) the brother of the husband, b) the brother of the wife and c) the husband of the wife's sister:

a) is called տադր [tagr* E / dakr W]

b) is a աներձագ [anerdzag E / anertsak W]

c) is a քենակալ [kenakal* E] or քենեկալ [kenegal W].

Each of these relatives, in turn, is associated with certain stereotypes. You should never be in debt to your տադր [tagr* E / dakr W], your "husband's brother".

Տեգօր (տադրոջ) պահած հարսը մեռնի, աղբօր պահած քուրը:

Damned is the bride kept by her dakr; damned is the sister kept by her brother.*

The husbands of sisters, the քենակալ-s or քենեկալ-s [kenakal* E / kenegal W], are never on good terms:

Օխտը (եօթը) քենակալ մի ճամփով գնում էին, ասացին.
«Մի մարդ էլ չկայ, որ հետը խօսանք:»

Seven kenakals were walking on the road. "A pity, there is nobody to talk to," they said.*

Քենակալը որ լաւ բան ըլնէր, Աստուածն էլ քենակալ
կ'ունենար:

If a kenakal were any good, God would have one, too.*

The question of kinship is not only one of nomenclature: socio-psychological relations between various family members connected by marriage have tended to follow set patterns in Armenian proverbs, with a range of distinctions far outreaching the English mother vs. son-in-law conflict. In fact, in-laws in Armenian are most definitely separated into "his" and "hers": a mother-in-law is either *դռքանչ* or *կեսուր*, depending on whether she is the wife's or the husband's mother. Cultural stereotypes also dictate the kinds of interactions commonly associated with these figures. As a rule, sons do not leave the parental home upon marriage. This not only reflects the higher social status enjoyed by the male, but captures as well some of the greater tensions thought to arise between a mother- and daughter-in-law. The frustration of a bride under the thumb of her mother-in-law is enormous:

Զխօսող հարսը դռները կը կոտրէ:

A silent daughter-in-law will break doors.

Fighting is on the everyday agenda and sons are often put in a difficult position:

Հարս ու կեսուր կռուեցին, մարդը մնաց քարի արանքին:

The mother- and daughter-in-law had a squabble; the husband was caught in the middle.

The mother-in-law exploits her son's new bride:

Հարսը կեսրոջ դուլն (ստրուկ) է:

A daughter-in-law is her mother-in-law's slave.

Therefore, a young bride yearns for her parental home:

Հարսին հէրանց տունն ասա, ոտը բոպիկ էլ կ'երթայ:

Just mention to the bride her parents' home and she'll run there barefoot.

Most of the family proverbs are specific and therefore literal in their reference; however, some of them have expanded semantically beyond the realm in which they were created. To recall just one current proverb out of hundreds of such instances:

Աղջիկս քեզ ըսեմ, հարսս դուն հասկցիր:

My daughter, I'll tell you, my daughter-in-law, it's meant for you.

Literally this proverb refers to the practice of addressing one's own daughter in order to pass a remark indirectly to one's daughter-in-law; today this proverb applies metaphorically to any instance of indirect expression of criticism or disapproval.

The son-in-law syndrome is another story altogether and quite a contrast to the North American stereotype. An ideal son-in-law should be diligent, industrious, and a good provider. Such a son-in-law is the favorite of his wife's mother:

Փեսէն զոքանչի սիրեկանն է:

A son-in-law is his mother-in-law's favorite.

In Armenian folklore, a "mother-in-law's omelette" is known for its special flavor:

Չոքանչի եփած ձուածեղը համով կ'ըլնի:

The mother-in-law's (wife's mother) omelette tastes best.

The amicable relationship between mother- and son-in-law leads to jealousy on the part of the father-in-law.

Չոքանչի սիրած փեսին աները կ'ատէ:

A father-in-law hates his wife's favorite son-in-law.

An entirely different picture is drawn of the "bad" son-in-law who, lacking money and a house, must live with his wife's family. For such individuals, a special word has been created, **տունփեսայ** or **տան փեսայ**, literally, "house-son-in-law" or better, "live-in son-in-law." Such a relative is not popular:

Տան փեսայ, չան փեսայ:

A live-in son-in-law is a dog's son-in-law.

This "intruder" is treated to pejoratives such as "doormat":

Տնփեսան որ կայ, ոտի տակ ընկած փալաս (քուրջ) ա:

A live-in son-in-law is like a mat under the feet.

[This proverb can be cited also by the son-in-law himself, alluding to his sense of humiliation.]

Incoming brides, in a family of two or three sons, create a hierarchy among themselves, based on their husbands' rank. At the same time, a new daughter-in-law can displace an earlier bride:

Ները որ տուն մտնի, ներոջը գետին կը դնի:

When a (new) ner comes into the home, she puts down the (former) ner.*

Under crowded living conditions and given such a potentially rigid etiquette, proverbs of the following type are well nigh inevitable:

Մի հարսնանի տունը չէն, երկուսն եղաւ, կիսաչէն, երեքը-չորսը, փախի՜ մեչէն (անտառը):

A home with one daughter-in-law is all right, with two of them it's half as bright, but three or four is a dogfight!

The elderly are considered the most important members of the extended family, the "pillars" of the house.

Պառաւր տան սիւնն է:

The elder is the pillar of the house.

Տունը սիւնը կը պահէ:

It's the pillar that holds up the house.

Life for the elderly is very difficult; they can become a burden as they age:

Գէլը որ պառանայ, չներին մասխարա կը դառնայ:
When the wolf gets old, he is mocked by dogs.

Particularly problematic is the position of a dependent mother-in-law living with her daughter's family.

Դուշմանս փեսի յոյսին չմնայ:
I would not want even my enemy to depend on a son-in-law.

A widowed mother-in-law living at the mercy of her son-in-law would remember fondly her late husband's shadow, i.e., his protection:

Մարդի չուաք (չուք), վարդի չուաք:
The shadow of a husband, the shadow of roses.

Armenian proverbs also express views on the relationship between the so-called *խնամի*, the "in-laws," and the frictions which normally occur between the parents of a married couple who in Armenian families are in constant contact and competition. It is common knowledge that closeness among in-laws leads to clashes. There is also much hypocrisy and covering up in this relationship. Compare the hyperbolic proverb:

Խնամու սողտը, սէլ (սայլ) մը չի քաշէ:
The lies of the in-laws, not even a wheelbarrow could carry.

Obviously, in-laws go to great, even undue lengths, to hide their negative feelings with excessive formalities. However, these masks are transparent:

Խնամու նազը տանիլ չի բլիլ:
The airs and graces of in-laws are unbearable.

As the best recipe for a peaceful family life, a proverb advises that visits between in-laws be kept to a minimum:

Խնամի ուշ է եկել, անուշ է եկել
In-laws who come rarely, come dearly.

Whereas West European folklore honored the godmother with the well-known "fairy godmothers" of Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty and countless other tales, Armenia accords this respect to the godfather. The difference is more than one of gender, though, as can be seen in the choice of genre. A fairy godmother's influence, however fortuitous, remains in the sphere of the magical and, hence, unreal; a "real-life" Armenian godfather has very concrete obligations, enshrined in a series of family proverbs devoted to this relative.

As in other Christian nations, Armenian tradition holds that the baptism of a child is a sacred event, celebrated like a second birth. Once a godfather is confirmed, it is for life:

Քաւորը փոխիլ, մեռոնը կոխիլ
To change the godfather is to taint the chrism (holy oil).

The role of the godfather in the upbringing of a child is considered almost equal to that of the parents and the elderly. Because he is bound to his charge not by blood ties but by spiritual affinity alone, his position as role model becomes all the more important. Therefore, the choice of a godfather carries enormous weight. In the long run, it is hoped that the child will follow in the steps of the ideal godfather. The desire for such a resemblance is so great that the godfather is ranked immediately after the parents as an honorary, almost genetic influence. This respect gives rise to the notion, often humorously expressed, that if a child does not take after his parents, he will take after his godfather, whatever he represents:

Եա հօրն ու մօրը, եա ծոռն ու մոռն կնքահօրը:
(The child takes) either after the mother and the father, or after the odd godfather.

There are many financial and moral responsibilities connected with the role of a godfather:

Կնքահայր ըլլալը թանկ է, անուն դնելը բան չէ:
Being a godfather is costly; giving a name is costless.

[Referring to the old custom whereby godfathers could be asked to choose a child's name.]

The remarkably close relationship between parents and godparents is expressed in a distinct naming system used to address each of these persons. While the godfather *կնքահայր* or *քաւոր* and the godmother *կնքամայր* or *քաւորակին* are addressed thus by the whole family, the godparents themselves have special terms to address the godchild's parents: *սանամայր* [*sanamayr**] for the mother and *սահահայր* [*sanahayr**] for the father of the godchild. Some proverbs reveal a particular attachment between a godfather and the mother of his godchild bordering on flirtation. Consider the following proverb where the godfather pays inordinate respect to the *սանամայր* [*sanamayr**]:

Քաւորին դրին տանուտէր, առաջ սանամօրը դրեց էշին:
They put the godfather in charge, he seated the sanamayr on the donkey first.*

In another proverb, the godfather praises the baking talents of the mother of his godchild, extolling her above all other women:

Ամէն գաթայ էլ գաթայ է, սանամօրը գաթան քրքշան է:
Every gata is a gata, but the sanamayr's* gata is crispiest.*

Proverbs also trace human bonds beyond the family. The significant role of the neighborhood as emphasized in a great number of proverbs defines it as an extension of the immediate family, the "macro-family," as it were. In Armenian, as in many other cultures, a neighbor can be considered to be as good as or better than a relative:

Մօտիկ հարեւանը լաւ ա, քանց հեռու բարեկամը:
A close neighbor is better than a distant relative.⁵⁰

Due to harsh climatic and economic conditions, neighbors depend on each other. In winter around the hearth and in summer in

front of their doors, they talk, sharing all their troubles and joys, communicating good and bad news and, of course, gossip. But most importantly, they share goods, some to be returned, others not. The importance of good neighbors is stressed in the following:

Մօտիկ հարեւանը լաւ ա, քանց հեռու քարեկամը։⁵⁰
A close neighbor is better than a distant relative.

If you've had bad luck with neighbors, you are advised to leave:

Հարեւանդ վատ ա, փախի՛ պրծի։
If your neighbor is no good, move away and save yourself.

But even bad neighbors can have their good side. Rather than borrowing goods, you will begin to obtain them yourself:

Վատ հարեւանը հարեւանին հաճաթատէր (դործիքի տէր) է արեւ։
A bad neighbor makes you become the owner of tools.

To maintain ideal relations, proverbs preach a set of community ethics. To cite just a few:

Ջուրդ որ աւելնայ, առաջ դրկիցիդ ծառի տակ կապի, յետոյ ուրիշի տուր։
After you water your garden, channel the water to your nearest neighbor's trees and then give it to others.

Դրկիցի շանը քար չեն գցի, տիրոջ խաթրը կը պահեն։
For the sake of the owner, one should not stone a neighbor's dog.

Դրացիիդ հարսնիք է նէ, դուռդ մեծ բաց։
If your neighbor has a wedding, keep your doors wide open.

6.3 Folk Beliefs

The Armenian proverb, no less than the folk tale or other folk genres, preserves some traces of the oldest beliefs of the people and thus can shed light on the Armenian world-view (Dundes 1978:109). Without knowing those beliefs, it is impossible to understand Armenian folklore.

In his thesis *Der Armenische Volksglaube*³⁷ Abeghian (1899) defines Armenian folk beliefs as predominantly Christian in nature. However, many heathen elements appear to have survived and are still discernible in the Christian context. To this variety of influences was added that of Armenia's long history of close proximity to other, non-Christian cultures. Thus, Abeghian arrives at the three components of Armenian folk belief: Christianity, paganism and Islam. Accepting the pagan-Christian synthesis as dominant, Abeghian concentrates mainly on the pagan component, which he defines as a primitive mythology present in the folklore of almost any culture. He considers the pre-Islamic Iranian element to have been the most influential. He stresses, however, that whatever external influences or parallels there may be, the vital components of Armenian folk belief are still best understood if treated on a par with indigenous Armenian elements (Abeghian 1975:13).³⁸

Armenia being one of the first nations to accept Christianity as a state religion, her proverbs draw upon very deep roots in Christianity, glorifying belief in the one God and his Son. A popular proverb promises long life to those who have (Christian) faith:

Հաւատք ունիս, շատ կ'ապրիս:
If you have faith, you'll live long.

Credence must be heartfelt and genuine:

Հաւատքն իրմէ պէտք է, վրան քսուածը հաւատք չէ:
Faith must come from within, what is spread on is not faith.

Armenian proverbs reflect the Christian ethic at its best. A number of proverbs address such fundamental notions as good and evil, divine and human nature, and the omnipotence of God. They suggest ideals of humanitarianism, benevolence and peace which are supposed to be upheld at every level of human relations, both within and outside the family. Proverbs feature the abstract notions *մարդկութիւն* "humanness"; *լաւութիւն* "goodness," "good deeds" or "charity"; *խաթր* "kindness," "goodwill," or "favor," and the like.

Անուշ հոտը վարդուց կ'ուզեն, մարդկութիւնը մարդուց կ'ուզեն:

A sweet smell you expect of roses, humanness of humans.

To serve God well is to do good without expecting any reward:

Լաւութիւն արա, ջուրը գցի, ձուկը չիմանայ՝ Աստուած կ'իմանայ:

Do good, throw it into the sea; if the fish don't notice, God will.

Alms are not to be given publicly, in order to gain social approval (Niebuhr 1934:51). This idea is expressed in the following:

Ողորմութիւնն էնպէս տուր, որ շապիկդ չիմանայ:
Give charity without even your shirt knowing it.

Regard for human kindness and pacifism prevails:

Խաթրը դուռից լաւ է:
Kindness is better than violence.

Armenian proverbs reject the attitude of "an eye for an eye," calling for goodness even in the face of evil, for we are to forgive as God forgives. The following proverb illustrates this point:

Լաւութիւնին լաւութիւն, ամէն մարդու բանն ա, վատութիւնին լաւութիւն, մարդ մարդու բանն ա:

Return good for good, anyone can do it; return good for evil, only a real human can do it.

There is an astonishing number of proverbs insisting on good deeds and thoughts, based upon the rewards of their practice and the penalties for their neglect:

Մ'ընէր անօրէն, կը գտնաս Երկնաւորէն:
Do no wrong, the Almighty will pay you before long.

Մարդ մարդի խօսքին մտիկ կը տայ, Աստուած՝ սրտին:
Man listens to man's words, God to man's heart.

Proverbs continually remind us of the vanity of life, a fleeting moment in the whole of eternity.

Աշխարհքը լուսամուտ ա, ամէն եկող մտիկ կը տայ ու կ'երթայ:
The world is a window: every newcomer looks out and then departs.

Spiritual wealth is superior to material possessions:

Լաւ է մարմնաւոր աղքատ, քան հոգեւոր:
Better to be poor in goods than in spirit.

It is the spiritual which sustains. The soul is more important than the material world:

Հոգին քաղցր է քան մարմինը:
The soul is sweeter than the body.

Love of property is ultimately futile, since nothing in this material world belongs to anybody:

Աշխարհքը ոչ ոքի չի մնացել:
Nobody could keep this world for himself.

Աշխարհքը Սողոմոն իմաստունին էլ չի մնացել:
Even Solomon the Wise couldn't keep this world for himself.

And more emphatically, people say:

Աշխարհքը ու՞մ է մնացել, որ քեզ մնայ:

Who could ever keep this world for himself, that you should be able to?

Proverbs present absolute faith in God and his Son, utterly beyond doubt or questioning:³⁹

Քրիստոսին աչքով չտեսան, սրտով ճանչցան:

They didn't see Christ with their eyes, they recognized him in their hearts.

When bad things happen, it is regarded as a warning from God:

Ոտքդ քարին զարնուի, խղճմտանքդ քննէ՛:

When you stumble on a stone, examine your conscience.

This proverb may be a paraphrase of a saying found in the Talmud: "Should a man see suffering come upon him, let him scrutinize his actions" (Bokser 1962:99).

This type of saying conveys explicit religious messages and may therefore be classified as that of "religious proverbs." Some of these can be traced back to the Bible. However the majority of proverbs using religious vocabulary do not necessarily express religious ideas. Many folk beliefs are captured in proverbs which convey messages relevant to other, more secular spheres of life. Proverbs referring to saints, for instance, are open to a variety of interpretations. Saints, with and without their proper names, are popular figures in Armenian proverbs. As Tylor (1958:206 vol. 2) and Abeghian (1966:432) observe, saints are God's servants, acting as substitutes for the local gods of the pre-Christian period.

Saints, like Սուրբ Սարգիս [Sourb Sargis E / Sourp Sarkis W] "Saint Sarkis," Սուրբ Գեորգ [Sourb Gevorg E / Sourp Kevork W] "Saint George," Սուրբ Կարապետ [Sourb Karapet E / Sourp Garabed W] "Saint Karapet," and others are each assigned to their own area of influence; they are greatly esteemed by the common folk and therefore appear frequently. A proverb pitying the small and poor person whose dreams are overly ambitious says:

Գոմը քնել է, Սուրբ Գեորգը երազը կը տեսնէ:
He sleeps in the stall, but dreams of Saint George.

Stressing the limitations that even the saints have when it comes to fighting inherited imbecility, the Armenian proverb says:

Մօրուց խենթ ըլլողին, Սուրբ Սարգիսն ի՛նչ անի:
What can Saint Sarkis do for someone born an idiot.

People pray to the saints, promising them incense, candles and other offerings. When it comes to promises, prudence and temperance are recommended:

Ո՛չ սրբին մոմ խոստացիր, ո՛չ երեխուն բլիթ:
Don't promise candles to a saint, nor candies to a child.

The saints are among those authority figures who can be manipulated:

Սրբին աղօթք ընելով կը խաբեն, չանը՝ ոսկորով:
They fool the saints with prayers, and the dogs with bones.

No matter how important the saints may be, folk wisdom advises reliance on the sole authority of God, rather than on the inferior plurality of saints.

Լաւ է մէկ անգամ Աստծուն խնդրել, քան քառասուն անգամ քառասուն սրբի:
It's better to beg God once, than forty saints forty times.

Obviously, all these proverbs offer worldly rather than spiritual wisdom.

There are many proverbs which reflect the long development of the Armenian religious tradition. This tradition is imbued with animism, the most ancient "doctrine of souls and the spiritual beings in general" (Tylor 1958:23 vol. 1). Animism includes belief in the soul and the spirit which govern people's lives, and are omnipresent in both animate and inanimate elements of the universe. Animism also

includes belief in the afterlife, the cult of ancestors, good and bad spirits, ghosts, magic, etc.

Some words or notions found in proverbs, or even the text of a proverb as a whole, are frequently not intelligible to the modern user even though he or she may know the appropriate time and place to use the proverb in question. As a result of changes in language and society, very often the old meaning of the text has been lost, and the message is no longer derived from its content. A journey into remote antiquity can sometimes help to understand the text.

Below, I will present some instances of Armenian proverbial expression containing elements which reflect, directly or indirectly, various ancient concepts of folk belief surviving in the Christian era. Some of these can be identified as having parallels with or originating from other cultures. Nevertheless, that should not prevent us from treating these concepts as part of the Armenian belief system proper.

To begin with, I will introduce a proverb which contains rudiments of early animism, the "stock-and-stone worship" (Tylor 1958:246 vol. 2) of a primitive society. It is captured in two versions of the same proverb, whose didactic content suggests respect and reverence for the elderly:

Ինչ տուն որ մեծ չլինի, մեծ քար մը տեղը կը դնեն:

If there is no elder in the house, they set up a stone instead.

Տանը որ մեծ չլինի, տեղը քոթուկ (կոճղ) կը դնեն:

If there is no elder in the house, they set up a stump instead.

It is obvious that the items *քար* "stone" and *քոթուկ* "stump" or "stock" represent here totemic objects incorporating the souls of ancestors, a conception typical of primitive ethnarchy in a "low" civilization (Ghananian 1960:XX). Tylor (1958) treats "stock-and stone worship" under the general heading of fetishism and follows its religious development through the history of mankind. According to him, paying devotion and adoration to stones associated with ancestral worship has held an important place among primitive tribes to this very day. "Among lower races of America, the Dakotas would pick up a round boulder, paint it, and then, addressing it as grandfather, make offerings to it and pray to it to deliver them from

danger" (Tylor 1948:247-249 vol. 2). In a very similar way, the two Armenian proverbs above stress the importance of the head of a tribe or family, setting him up as an object of reverence.

An old but very current saying deriving from a totemic past is:

Առանց իշի գլխի հարսանիք չի լինի:

There can be no wedding without a donkey's head.

[i.e., We cannot get by without this person!]

Today, this proverb is quoted spontaneously when a person's indispensability must be stressed, but the actual connection between the words and the meaning is somewhat obscure. Based on ethnographic material, Ghanalanian explains that this proverb goes back to a very archaic totemic ritual at Armenian weddings or other festivities. According to a custom which continued at Armenian weddings until the end of the 19th century, people would appear wearing animal heads or masks, remnants of the animal-worship of earlier totemic times. The "donkey's head" in the proverb refers to the main entertainer at a wedding, usually a close relative of the bride or bridegroom, who would don such a mask and act as the indispensable joker at the festivities, much like the clown in today's circus (Ghanalanian 1960:XX).

One of the central points in the Armenian folk belief system is the dichotomy of *լոյս* "light" and *խաւար* "darkness" which corresponds to the antithesis of good and evil forces (Abeghian 1975:15). A similar opposition is found in Iranian mythology, where Ormazd represents good and Ahriman, evil (Abeghian 1975:48). In Armenian folklore, all the goodness in life, daylight, joy and happiness are caused by luminous, bright souls, whereas all the evil, death, sicknesses and misfortune are the work of fearsome night demons, such as the *սատանայ* "devil," the *սեւ դէմքեր* "black devs*," etc. Light is to be worshipped, and therefore *Տիակ Տէր Աստուած* "the only Lord God" and all the saints are perceived as light (Abeghian 1975:16). Paradise is seen to be bright and hell to be dark. This view is encoded in the following proverb comparing the effect of money or bribery with that of light on the darkness:

Փողը դժոխքին լոյս կը տայ:
Money brings light to hell.

There is an endless antagonism between good and evil powers:

Չարը բարուն հակառակ է:
Evil is against the good.

The darkness of the night is brought on by evil forces and is therefore associated with infernal torment and plague, whereas daylight is perceived as the work of good spirits and linked to a luminous paradise. No wonder then that in darkness, life's problems look worse than in daylight, as the proverb says:

Իրիկուան լացիկ, խլիսուան (լուսաբաց) ծաղրիկ:
What is lamented at night will be laughed at in sunlight.

Proverbs advise us not to despair in any calamity or disaster, for:

Չէ եղեր գիշեր, որ չէ լուսեր:
There has yet to be a night which has not grown bright.

In the darkness, a host of evil forces wanders in various shapes, hovering around people; imaginary figures like the դեւ [dev*], the վիշապ [vishap*], the քաջք [kachk*], and many others abound in proverbs.

The dreaded դեւեր "devs*" are giant anthropomorphic demons, as big as the mythical mountain Պող [Pogh]. As mountains have any number of peaks, devs* can have two, three or seven heads. They live in Դեւաստան [devastan] which can be any Armenian region with mountains and caves. In the daytime, they stay away from people; at night they behave like brigands (Abeghian 1975:89-90).

Devs* are nocturnal beasts who fear daylight and fire:

Դեւը կրակից փախ ա:
The dev fled the fire.*

To emphasize the use of coercion, when goodwill is absent, people say:

Դեւը դարբնոց չէր երթում, գլխին տալով տարան:

The dev didn't want to go to the forge, but they made him go by force.*

[“Forge,” associated with fire, is feared by the evil devs*.]

Devs are very dangerous, and only the holy cross can stop their destructive work:

Խաչն եկաւ, դեւ խափանաւ:

(When) the cross appeared, the dev was barred.*

A place where many devs* live is called also *դեւնոց* [*devnots* E / tevnots W*], and this term is used figuratively for an excessive concentration of evil people in one place. To express, for instance, vexation when a crowd of evil people or a horrible situation becomes worse, Armenians say:

Քիչ դեւ կար ի դեւնոց, մէկն էլ իջաւ երդընուց (երդիկ):

As if there weren't enough devs in the devnots*, now one came down from the roof.*

The greatest personal misfortune is “to be stricken by a dev*” *դիւահարուել* [*divaharvel*] or *ջինաւորուել* [*djinavorvel*]. The loss of a child, for instance, is comparable to such a blow:

Զիգրի (հարազատ) մումուռը չտեսնողը չի ջինաւորուել (դիւահարուել):

He who hasn't lived through the death of his child, has never been stricken by a dev.*

The *dev** appears to be as nefarious or even worse than other forces of evil and alternates with those forces in different versions of the same proverb.

Նմանը նմանին, սատանան ու իր խնամին:

Like protects like, as the devil his tribe [lit.: his in-laws].

Նմանը նմանին, դեւն ու իր խնամին:
Like protects like, as the dev his tribe.*

As can be seen, սատանա [*satana*] "devil" and *dev** are interchangeable.

*Devs** are related to the վիշապ [*vishap**] "dragon." *Vishaps** are often portrayed as giant serpents which can easily vanquish any ordinary serpent. Hence the figurative proverb with the message: know your limits and do not compare yourself with a giant or with someone who is greater in strength:

Օձն ուշափին (վիշապ) հետ չափուեցաւ, հազար տեղէ
 կտրատեցաւ:
The serpent measured her strength with the vishap, and was*

chopped up in a thousand pieces.

The battle of the good Thunder God against monsters who withhold the desperately-needed rain, is a common motif in Indo-Germanic mythology (Meyer 1903:238). A thunderstorm with lightning is seen as a battle between good and evil. In the pre-Christian era it was the Thundergod and in the Christian era it is God or Christ or any saint who struggles against the վիշապ [*vishap**] to win back the water and the sun for the people (Abeghian 1975:69). Hence, in times of drought, Armenian peasants say:

Վիշապն է չոքել ջրի վրէն:

A vishap is crouching over the water.*

In another version of this struggle, the Thundergod is replaced by Եղիա "Elias." According to a folk tale, whenever Եղիա "Elias" speeds overhead in his carriage to catch a debtor who has fled with his borrowed money, the roaring of his carriage creates lightning. Here, the debtor takes the place of the *vishap** whereas the borrowed money substitutes for the rain clouds. People believe that it is Elias who brings the rain. This is how Abeghian explains the following old proverb (Abeghian 1975:70):⁴⁰

Քեանի Եղիակ չէր եկէ, անձրեւ չէր եկէ:
For as long as Elias didn't show, there was no rain.

The newer, more common version of this proverb is:

Մինչեւ ամպը չգողայ, անձրեւ չի գայ:
Without thunder there will be no rain.

Still another evil force known from Armenian folklore is the *քաջք* [*kachk**]. According to Abeghian, these are mountain ghosts, the bridegrooms of nymphs or *Յաւերժահարս* [*haverzhahars*]. They are evil male ghosts of human origin who can become invisible. *Քաջք* [*kachk**]s steal children and torture humans and animals at every opportunity (Abeghian 1975:87). The following proverb is intended to intensify the repudiation of evil women by making even the *քաջք* [*kachk**] fear them:

Վատ կնարմատից քաջքերն էլ փախել են:
Even the kachks fled evil women.*

Besides these imaginary beings, some animals are viewed as symbols of evil, usually associated with the night. The most dreaded animals are snakes, since Ahriman, the personification of evil, is perceived in the shape of a serpent. According to Iranian mythology, Ahriman darkens the world by covering it with all kinds of reptiles, such as snakes, scorpions, and others (Abeghian 1975:32). These harmful nocturnal creatures abound in Armenian proverbs. Among them are frogs, who, if touched, can cause warts; in Armenian, *գորտնուկ* “wart” is derived from *գորտ* “frog.” In an old wedding song, the frog is classified as a creature as repugnant as the serpent (Abeghian 1975:32). The same treatment can be seen in the Armenian proverbial equivalent of the English “when it rains, it pours”:

Գորտին կծածը, օձն ալ կը կծէ:
What is bitten by the frog, will also be bitten by the snake.

Other animals associated with Ahriman are the ants. These insects are considered to be “miniature sisters” of serpents. Their

presence is linked to destruction and death, suggested by the barrenness around an ant hill. Figuratively, Armenians refer to worthless people when they say:

Մըջման բնի բոլոր բան չի բուսնի:

Around an ant hill nothing will grow.

Another force of evil is the wolf. Even today in some rural areas, the word "wolf" is taboo because of the animal's ferocity, and they call it simply *դադան* [gazan E / kazan W] "beast." The great number of Armenian proverbs containing the name of this beast speaks for itself. Most of them describe the wolf in dark colors. As a symbol of evil, the wolf is blood-thirsty:

Գայլը արիւնով է հարբում:

The wolf gets drunk on blood.

Therefore, proverbial wisdom advises:

Գայլին ինչքան շուտ սպանես, էնքան քիչ վնաս կը քաշես:

The sooner you kill the wolf, the less harm it will do to you.

The name of the wolf appears frequently in prayers, invocations, spells, and charms, the so-called *աղօթք*, which are directed against all manner of evil forces. There, the wolf occupies a very important place, standing above all malevolent animal figures such as snakes, scorpions, and frogs (Abeghian 1975:33-34). However, in the face of the dreadful beast, such invocations are futile. Here is a proverb expressing this helplessness:

Գիլու բերանը աղօթքով չի կապուի:

You can't bind a wolf's jaws with charms.

In Armenian proverbs, death is presented as a natural phenomenon to which people most often surrender without struggle:

Մահը մերն է, մենք մահինը:

Death belongs to us, we belong to death.

The dialectic sequence of beginning and end is accepted in the following saying:

Ինչ ծնում է, մեռնում էլ է:
What is born, shall also die.

Another proverb, also conciliatory with death, is biblical in nature:

Գետինէն ելել է, գետինը կ'երթայ:
He came from earth, he will return to earth.

Armenian proverbs also embrace an animistic view of death. This belief in the survival of the soul and in a future life after death is shared by so many other cultures. According to this belief, when a person dies, the soul lives on outside the body. Separated souls depart to confront Judgment. All of us will, at the end of time, be held accountable for our deeds:

Դատաստան կայ գալու, պատասխան կայ տալու:
On Judgment Day, you will be made to pay.

In accordance with the dualism of good versus bad, white versus black, or bright versus dark, the souls of just people are perceived as bright and white, whereas those of the unjust are dark and black. When a person is born, light enters the body as a principle of life and resides in its left side or in the heart. Children's souls stay white and shiny for the first ten years, whereas the souls of adults darken as they sin. On Judgment Day, people's earthly deeds are weighed on the *արդարութեան կշեռք* "scales of justice" and the souls' destinations, heaven or hell, are decided. Bright souls go to heaven, dark ones to hell (Abeghian 1975:25):

Արդարն ու մեղաւորը Դատաստանին յայտնի կ'ըլլայ:
Just or unjust, it will be known on Judgment Day.

As so often happens, proverbs offer both sides of the picture, and we can find examples of those which contest the established view

of the afterlife:

Դժոխքն էլ, դրախտն էլ, էս աշխարհումն է:
Both heaven and hell are in this world.

More sarcastically, death is defined as the utter end of human existence:

Մահէն անդին գեղ չկայ:
There is no village after death.
 [i.e., There is no afterlife.]

This cynicism is further justified:

էն կեանքեմէն ոչ ոք խապար չի բերել:
Nobody has ever brought news from the next life.

Superstitious people fear death and the deceased. According to folk belief, the spirits of the newly deceased linger amongst the living. People believe that separated souls can seek revenge for past injustices by inflicting disease. Sufferers of this sort are called *մեռելից վախեցած* "scared by the dead," and the sickness itself simply *վախ* or *ահ* "fear" (Abeghian 1975:19). Hence the proverb:

Մահը ահ կու տայ, ահն ալ մահ կու տայ:
Death causes fear, and fear causes death.

Even the devil fears the deceased:

Սատանէն մեռլից վախ ա:
The devil dreads the dead.

Some ancient customs commemorating departed relatives have survived in Christian times (James 1962:190-191). It is believed that a dead person's body needs special care in order to become "bright" in the positive, ethical sense described above.⁴¹ Neglect of one's ancestors can turn separated souls into malignant forces in the shape of animals, beasts, birds and even inanimate objects which plague such disrespectful descendants and cause illness (Newell 1976:28). One form of propitiating the souls and dead relatives is to present them

with հոգեհաց [lit.: “bread for their souls,” i.e., a wake], which is still a vital custom among Armenians. Following the death of relatives, people gather on the day of the funeral, then seven days later, then again after forty days, as well as on the first anniversary; these gatherings take place in the homes of the departed or at the gravesite. Such rituals often turn into great feasts, financially straining the organizers. Hence the proverb:

Հարսնոցին խելք պէտք է, հոգու հացին՝ ուժ:

For a wedding you need brains, for a wake lots of strength
[i.e., financial strength].

Wishing for fairness in the distribution of fate and particularly of death, a sibling prefers to offer a հոգեհաց “wake” for his father rather than for his brother. Here, հոգեհաց “wake” stands for a funeral or death:

Հարսնինքն եղբորս պէտք է, հոգու հացը՝ հորս:

The wedding is for my brother, the wake for my father.

While drinking to the memory of a dead relative, people ask God to have mercy, saying Աստուած ողորմի հոգուն *“God have mercy upon his soul.”* As a result of its popularity, especially in Eastern Armenian, this expression has been established as a routine formula when names of deceased are mentioned. (Աստուած) ողորմի հոգուն is also perceived as a blessing or an expression of gratitude. A proverb referring to the significance of intonation in speech says:

«Ողորմի հոգուն» կայ, որ «չան որդի» ասելուց վատ է:

Some blessings sound worse than some cursings.

[Lit.: There is some “(God) bless his soul” which sounds worse than “son of a dog.”]

The closer the kinship between the dead and the commemorator, the greater the impact of the rites undertaken to appease the departed. The closest relatives are considered to be the children, and particularly the sons of the dead, who must pray, do good deeds, make offerings, etc. Therefore, people wish to leave heirs

behind who will save their souls from hell. Sons are encouraged to make sacrifices for the troubled souls of their fathers and are promised heaven in return:

Միւնչեւ հէրը դժոխք չերթայ, աղէն արքայութիւն չի գտնի:

The father must go to hell for the son to attain salvation.

In another version of this proverb, these sons are considered spiritually fortunate:

Երնէկ էն աղին, որ հէրը դժոխք կ'երթայ:
Fortunate is the son whose father goes to hell.

It is remarkable that both versions of this proverb have developed a secondary, secular meaning, indicating that a father has to endure many hardships in order to provide for his son a prosperous and happy life.

There are other traces of the ancestor cult reflected in proverbs. Deceased relatives are remembered five times a year, on the eve of great holidays which are called *Նաւակատիք* [*Navakatik* E / Navagadig W*]. On such days, the souls of the dead are said to come down from heaven to earth to visit their relatives. To be appeased, they must be invited into one's home with burning incense and lights. Souls are pleased with the light of oil lamps and candles and especially with the smell of incense. If not commemorated, souls become angry and can haunt their living relatives. These tokens of respect, among other obligations associated with *Նաւակատիք* [*Navakatik* E / Navagadig W*] are obligatory and perhaps the least enjoyable part of the great holiday celebrations; thus the word *Նաւակատիք* bears some negative connotations. Hence the following proverb used in situations when a happy occasion is spoiled by something unpleasant (Ghanalanian 1960:XXIII):

Հազարից մէկ Զատիկ, էն էլ Նաւակատիք:
Once in a thousand Easter comes, and Navakatik with it.*

Souls are also honored on Saturday nights (*Կիրակնամուտ* or

կիրականամուտ) by not undertaking any work and burning incense (խուռնկ) on the fireplace (օջախ), in order to attract the souls of the ancestors. It is a sin not to observe this custom (Abeghian 1975:27), as this proverb shows:

Ով կիրականամուտ չպահի, մէջ դժոխքի կրակին մաշի:

He who does not keep Sunday's eve, in the fires of hell is destined to grieve.

Failure to fulfill some Saturday night obligations is critical, for the devil (i.e., the angry souls) could be at work:

Սատանէն կիրականատին չարութիւն կ'անէ:

On Sunday's eve, the devil does his evil deeds.

Burning oil lamps for the souls of the dead (մեռի ճրագ) at night, and especially on Saturday nights (Abeghian 1975:27), is a symbol of piety and devotion. In a proverb condemning hypocrisy, burning oil lamps is displayed as a good deed:

Յերեկը ձութ կը ծամէ, գիշերը ձէթ կը վառէ:

In daytime he chews gum, at night he burns oil.

[Chewing gum is considered a sin.]

The importance of these elements (the oil lamp, the candles and the incense), is reflected in their frequent use in proverbs. To convey, for instance, the idea that everyone must receive his due, people say:

Ձէթը ճրագին, խուռնկը կրակին:

The oil to the lamp, the incense to the fire.

Burning incense represents a form of sacrificial rite which derives from very "early fumigations with herbs and chips of fragrant wood," and later from "oriental perfumes, myrrh and cassia and francincense" (Tylor 1958:470 vol.2). Coming to Christianity by "transmutation," incense constitutes an indispensable part of Armenian ecclesiastical observance even today. The word *խուռնկ*

“incense,” often combined with the word *մոմ* “candle,” is employed in a specifically Christian context:

Incense and cross:

Խոռենկը խաչին կը վայլէ:

The incense suits the cross.

[i.e., Some things belong together]

Incense and shrine:

Խոռենկն ու մոմը իր սրբավայրը կը գտնի:

The incense and candle will find their shrine.

[i.e., Good deeds will not pass unnoticed.]

Incense and saint:

Անմոռադատու սրբին խոռենկ ու մոմ տանող չի լինի:

To an unresponsive saint nobody brings incense and candle.

Incense and church:

Խոռենկ ու մոմդ քեզ ըլլի, թաք (միայն թէ) դու մեր ժամը (եկեղեցի) մի՛ գա:

Keep your incense and candles to yourself, but do not come to our church.

[i.e., Whatever your advantages, they are not worth the disadvantages you bring.]

Incense and heaven:

Խնկով մոմով արքայութիւն գնալ չի լինի:

You can't get to paradise just by burning incense and candles.

[i.e., It is not easy to get to heaven.]

Another example of pre-Christian custom surviving in Christianity is the *մատաղ* [*matagh** E / *madagh* W]. It refers to a lamb, a rooster or another animal slated for sacrifice, a ritual preserved from the pagan past. In many regions of Armenia even today, this pagan-Christian synthesis is very much alive in the regular slaughter of chosen animals in front of churches. Only the very best specimens are selected for the *matagh**. To express the idea that the good is always sacrificed, people say:

*Լաւ դառը մատաղացուի համար է:
A good lamb is made for matagh*.*

The motives for presenting a *matagh** can vary. It is usually pledged to God or the saints on the eve of a great venture or in order to celebrate its success. *Matagh** can also be promised in times of crisis, and especially when a loved one is ill. However, folk wisdom advises not to put one's hope in *matagh** for fate is an important factor:

*Հիւանդը որ գնալիք է, մատաղը չի օգնէ:
If the sick is bound to go, the matagh* won't help.
[i.e., Sacrifices won't help if the sick is destined to die.]*

*Matagh** also denotes the meat of the sacrificed animals which is either given away to the needy, or consumed within the family. The message "some things arrive too late" is conveyed by the following simile:

*Մինչեւ աղն եկաւ, մատաղը վերջացաւ:
By the time the salt arrived, the matagh* was finished.*

The *matagh** is to be consumed in moderation and with respect. This is evidenced by the proverb which cautions against overindulgence:

*Մատաղի միտով փոր չի կշտանալ:
You should not eat your fill of matagh*.*

*Matagh** often is used as a synonym for *հոգեհաց* "wake," the sacrifice that the surviving relatives offer to God as a request for his mercy on the souls of their dead. Criticizing deviousness and lipservice, a proverb compares a hypocritical person with one who would shirk his responsibility for his father's *հոգեհաց* "wake":

*Գիլու տարածը հօր հոգուն մատաղ է ասում:
What the wolf steals, he passes off as his father's matagh*.*

Another rite which has been carried over to Christianity from early animism is fasting. Privation by abstaining from all or some food was originally a "means of producing ecstasy and other morbid exaltation" to achieve contact with spiritual beings and at the same time "a healthy action of the body" (Tylor 1958:496 vol. 2). The practice of fasting, *պահք*, in dialects used as *պաս*, endured virtually intact for many centuries, and has come to be associated with major Christian holidays. This is reflected in proverbs with various messages:

Religious abstinence has its rewards:

Պահք չբռնողը Ջատկին համը չի գիտեր:

He who does not fast does not know the taste of Easter.

However, for the poor fasting means further deprivation, both before and after the fasting period:

Պաս պահեմ, պաս պահեմ, ագռաւի մտո՞ւյ թաթախուեմ:⁴²

Should I fast and fast, and then break the fast with crowmeat?

Sleep in Armenian folk belief is considered to be a dangerous state, and the bed is like the grave, for sleep allows neither the body nor the soul to function. Hence the proverb:

Քնած ու մեռած, դիփ մէկ է:

Asleep or dead, it's just the same.

When a person sleeps, night demons such as the so-called *խիպիլիկ*,⁴³ [*khipilik**] overcome the human body, shaking and torturing it. Names of these malicious creatures are preserved in the rhyme of the following saying containing many despised images, among them *Սլիկ* [*Slik*], a distorted version of the name *Սիլվանոս* [*Silvanos*].⁴⁴ This saying is used with reference to a very evil person, comparing the latter to all devious and vicious creatures imaginable:

Ի՞նչ Սլիկ, ի՞նչ խիպիլիկ, ի՞նչ սատանէն, ի՞նչ իր կնիկ:

What is (the difference between) a Slik and a khipilik*, the devil and his wife?*

Dreams can be especially disturbing if one does not sleep in the right place:

Գէշ տեղ պառկողը գէշ երազներ կը տեսնէ:
He who sleeps in a bad place, will dream bad dreams.

As in other oriental cultures, in Armenian folk belief dreams prophesize the immediate future:

Երազն առաջնախօս է:
A dream is a foreboding.

A dream is bound to come true sooner or later:

Երազ կայ՝ օրն է կատարուում, երազ էլ կայ՝ տարին:
Some dreams come true in a day, others in a year.

Vestiges of the old fire cult have survived in the Armenian folk belief system. As Abeghian reports, in rural areas people swear by the fire and it is a sin to say "douse the fire"; instead one must say "bless the fire" (Abeghian 1975:58). This credence can be traced back to the custom of primitive people of the "keeping fire" rather than facing the trouble of obtaining it again. To keep fire alive was made a sacred duty in the ethical religion of Zoroaster, the prophet of ancient Iran (Dawson 1931:42-43).⁴⁵ In this vein, and coinciding with the development of the family unit in a patriarchal society (Kosven 1953:151), a cult of the hearth developed. Many Armenian proverbs contain the word *օջախ* [*odjakh**], a traditional fireplace, as well as the word *թոնիր* [*toneer**],⁴⁶ a brick oven built into the ground in the middle of the house. Both are used as symbols of the home, the household, the family, or even the generation. This sense is given in the following proverb:

Տղէն որ կայ, հօր օջախի սիւնն է:
A son is the pillar of his father's odjakh.*

Remnants of Zoroastrianism include the Armenian blessings:
Աստուած կրակը ձեր օջախում վառ պահէ "May God keep the fire

in your *odjakh** burning,” i.e., “May your kin live on.” Similarly, *օջախը մարել* “to put out the fire” means to destroy a house.

Կնկայ դումաչ հալաւը էրկան օջախը կը մարէ:

A wife's costly clothes destroy [lit.: efface] the husband's odjakh.*

In another family proverb, for instance, a bad son is characterized as one who keeps alive the fire in another's *odjakh**, such as his wife's rather than his own parents'.

Վատ տղան ցախ կը ժողուէ, ուրիշին օջախ կը վառէ:

A bad son collects wood to fuel somebody else's odjakh.*

An *օջախ* [*odjakh**] is sacred and the fire, as a cult object, should be extinguished only with ashes, for it is an offense to put it out with water. This rule can be found in primitive cultures, (Lippert 1931:584). Hence the prohibitive proverb:

Օջախը ջրով չեն հանդցնի:

Don't put out the odjakh with water.*

The ashes in the *օջախ* [*odjakh**] are also sacred and should not be wasted:

Օջախին մոխիրը քամուն չեն տաք:

Don't cast the ashes of the odjakh to the winds.*

In other proverbs *թոնիր* [*toneer**] too, is synonymous with the household. Compare the proverb quoted by people who are poor and destitute with little to lose:

Ո՛չ տուն ունեմ դուռը վրէն, ո՛չ էլ թոնիր խուփը վրէն:

I have no house with a door on it, nor a toneer with a lid on it.*

Used as early as the fifth century (Abeghian 1975:458), the *թոնիր* [*toneer**] has always been sacrosanct throughout Armenia. It was considered to be a place as holy as the church (Abeghian

1975:15). Even today, after the building of a *toneer**, a priest is called in to bless the site. People believed that this was the living place of the forefathers, the ghosts of the house, who remained at the edge of the *toneer** (*Թոնրի շուրթ, Թոնրի եզր*). Many sacrificial rites were therefore carried out during major family events such as weddings. However, due to Christian influences good ghosts, like all good spirits, can be confused with evil ghosts (Abeghian 1975:59). The same ghosts can bring good fortune one time and bad fortune another (Lippert 1931:151). Thus the *toneer** is also the home of evil ghosts or angry ancestors who punish living relatives when they sin:

Մեղաւորին փուշը Թոնրի եզերքին է:

The thorn for the guilty rests at the edge of the toneer.*

This ambivalent treatment of the *toneer** as both sacrosanct and a place of evil, is expressed in a proverb which warns that the *toneer** should not be stirred:

Սատանան խառնած Թոնրէն կ'ելլէ:

The devil will appear from a stirred toneer.*

Armenian proverbs concerning the fate of people are particularly popular. Due to the influence of Iranian folk belief, human fate can be linked with the regular movement of the heavens. According to this conception, a person's destiny is associated with the starry sky. The vault of heaven has no pillars or beams for support. The stars in the sky are like lamps which burn without oil. As the firmament turns, the stars move constantly, rising and setting. Some stars are good, some bad. Everybody is born under his own star. If you are born under a "good star" you will have lucky; if not, you won't. (Abeghian 1975:47). As the Armenian proverb observes:

Որին աստղն շիրին (պայծառ) է, որին՝ քռռ (կոյր):

The star of some is bright, of others blind [i.e. bleak].

A person who is *աստղով* "blessed with a star" will always be lucky:

Աստղով եղար, լեռ քարի վրայ երթաս՝ կը կանաչի:

If you are blessed with a star, even the rocky stones will thrive when you step on them.

Fate, however, is much more complicated than this example might indicate. As mentioned above, the vault of heaven is forever turning, and the stars along with it. This movement is no more and no less than the movement of time (Abeghian 1975:48). Time in Armenian folk belief is decisive and all-determining:

Ամէն բան վախտին կը նայի, վախտը ըսկի բանի չի նայի:
Everything depends on time, time depends on nothing.

Or:

Մարդս ժամանակին է մնում, ժամանակը մարդուն չի մնում:

People rely on time, time relies on no one.

Accordingly, some proverbs advise us to act in time, at the right moment: timing is crucial to decision-making:

Վախտը վախտին, թէ չէ ժամանակը անց է կենում:
Everything in its (right) time, for time passes.

Destinies can change for better or worse. The unfortunate can still hope for better luck. By the same token, even a lucky star can fall:

Ում բախտը ծռուեց, նրա ձին ախոռումը էջ կը դառնայ:
If your fate turns ill, your horse turns into a donkey in the stall.

However, some proverbs oppose fatalism, and emphasize the role played by a person as the master of his or her own destiny:

Մարդ ինչ որ իր ձեռով կ'անի, աշխարհ չի անի:
The (harm) you can do to yourself (with your own hands), the (whole) world couldn't do to you.

Cynicism can go as far as in the following proverb:

Գնա ծովն ընկիր, ճակտիս գիրն անանկ է ըսէ:
Go jump into the sea, and then say, "It was my destiny."

The Armenian բախտ [*baxt*] "fate" or "luck," an old loan word from Persian (Adjarian 1971:390), also appears in proverbs in the regional synonymic forms ֆալաք [*falak*] and Թալէհ [*taleh*]; these are also loan words from Persian, originating from the Persian *telek* "planet sky" (Abeghian 1975:47):

Ո՛չ ֆալաքին վստահի, ո՛չ քու մալին յուսացի:
Rely neither on your falak [fate], nor on your wealth.

Էն Թալէհն ունինք, որ վազող ջրին երթանք, կը կտրի:
With the taleh [luck] we have, the running water will dry up when we get there.

Frequently fate is associated with the Persian word *charkh* "wheel":

Աշխարհքս չարիս է, պտոյտ է գալիս:
The world is a wheel, it is turning.

Often չարիս [*charkh*] "wheel" appears in connection with ֆալաք [*falak*] "fortune" and is used as չարիսի ֆալաք or բախտին անիւը "wheel of fortune":

Բախտին անիւը միշտ կը դառնայ:
The wheel of fortune turns eternally.

While "fate" or "fortune" is linked to heaven, the notion "wheel of fortune" is rather earth-bound. The wheel of fortune stands in a cave full of every precious thing imaginable, in the city of Van. For only one minute on only one night in the year, that of Christ's Ascension, the door to this cave is opened and the treasure can be taken by whoever has had the good fortune to get to this place (Abeghian 1975:47). The moment must be seized, or as the proverb puts it:

Ճալաքը եղած ժամանակը պիտի բռնես:
Seize good fortune when it's there.

Another folk belief on human fate is associated with a recurrent figure in Armenian folklore, the **գրող** [*grogh**], which means "writer." When a person is born, an angel comes down to earth from heaven to inscribe this person's destiny on his or her forehead. Hence the Armenian term for "destiny" or "fate" **ճակատագիր** [*chakatagir E / djagadakis W*], derived from **ճակատ** [*chakat E / djagad W*] "forehead" and **գիր** [*gir E / kir W*] "writing."

A fatalistic attitude to such "writing" makes itself felt in a number of proverbs. Acceptance of one's fate is expressed in:

Ինչ որ գրած է, գրած է:
Whatever is written, is written.

Or:

Ճակատի գրածը չի ջնջուի:
You cannot erase what is written on your forehead.

Another, more specific version is:

Մօրէն ծնուեցաւ, գրուեցաւ ճակատին:
When he was born of his mother, it was written on his forehead.

Beside the original meaning of the word **գրող** [*grogh**] as "writer," there is another interpretation, namely that of the angel of death, identified with the Archangel Gabriel who is often called **հոգէհառ** or **հոգեհան** "he who draws out the soul." As Abeghian reports, the **գրող** or **հոգեհան** does not draw out the whole soul at once, but gradually. Armenian folk beliefs contain very primitive views about the way people die. If the person was good, the good angel gives him a red apple or a bouquet of flowers, inviting him to a wedding or to a house of joy; good people die without suffering, simply talking and laughing with pleasure. But if the person was bad, then it is the bad angel, the *grogh** who takes his soul. This way of

dying is very painful. The person not wanting to die, helplessly struggles with the *grogh**. The *grogh** tortures him mercilessly, finally driving a sword into his body and removing his soul (Abeghian 1975:22).

This is the death which people wish upon those they hate. Among such unpopular people, we find sons-in-law, the so-called *սոսնիկաւ*, or live-in sons-in-law who have no money, no house, and must live with their wife's family as described above. Hatred for such an unworthy son-in-law can go to extremes:

Գրողը մտաւ սոսնը, բոլորը փեւին երեսը նայեցին:

The grogh entered the house; everyone looked at the son-in-law.*

Armenians believe that at some point on this earth they all must face God's messenger, the angel of death or the *grogh**. In accordance with God's will, on their last day they must surrender their souls to the *grogh**, otherwise he will force them to do so (Abeghian 1975:22). It is only a mother who can triumph over the *grogh**:

Բերողը կը յաղթէ գրողին:

(Only) the bearer (of children) will defeat the grogh.*

We see in this proverb the supremacy of life over death through the interplay of these two figures, the *բերող* [*berogh*] "the bearer" [i.e., the mother], the symbol of procreation, and the *գրող* [*grogh**], the symbol of destruction (Ghanalanian 1960:LXXI).

Through constant use and overuse, the word *grogh** has degenerated into a vague pejorative; it can now cover any unpleasant person or force, demon, devil, marauding beast or even hell itself.⁴⁷ As a result, *grogh** is presented in the same category as the wolf, and misfortune will befall those who encounter them:

Գէլ ու գրող, վա՛յ մէկի տէր:

A wolf and a grogh, woe to the caretaker of the one (who encountered them)!*

As in many other cultures, in Armenian folklore the evil eye

features prominently.⁴⁸ According to the Armenian folk belief, the evil eye represents the personification of a bolt of lightning flashing through the clouds destroying every living thing in its path. It is the demon of sickness or the *ցաւ* [*tsav*] “pain” often confused or equated with the *գրող* [*grogh**]. It is the very incarnation of the evil which travels in the world with 666 sicknesses to harm people and to destroy everything in its path (Abeghian 1975:99). Its destructive nature is revealed in the following proverb:

Չար աչքը քարն էլ ճաքացնում ա:
The evil eye can crack even a stone.

Therefore, a well-known proverb warns:

Հեռու կեցիր չար աչքէն:
Beware of the evil eye.

All good things are susceptible to the evil eye. With its powers of destruction, it embodies people's fears of an inscrutable evil. All bad things are ascribed to the evil eye which has almost “devoured the world”:

Աչքն զտոյնէն (աշխարհ) ա կերեր:
The (evil) eye has eaten up the world.

As the most dangerous phantoms of sickness, evil eyes are so powerful that a pair of them can wreak the havoc of a single angel of death, the Armenian *grogh** discussed above:

Երկու աչքը մէկ գրողի բան կ'անէ:
Two (evil) eyes can do the work of one grogh.*

The evil eye can appear in the face of a blond, blue-eyed man. A proverb suggests to stay away from such people, for:

Շէկ մարդի աչքը զօրեղ կ'ըլնի:
The blond man's eye is powerful.

The evil eye is often associated with jealousy since envious

feelings can create evil (Moss/Cappannari 1976:4). Therefore people with physical defects are believed to possess the evil eye. Proverbs caution, for instance, against bald, lame and very short people, for they are stricken by evil and must live under the sign of God's contempt:

**Հասակով դաճածն հեռու կեցիր, զի Աստուած գլխուն է
զարկեր:**

Stay away from dwarves, for God has struck them on the head.

Among such imperfect people are hairless men and hairy women. Hence the proverb:

Փախի՛ր մազոտ կնիկէն, անմազ մարդէն:
Beware of hairy women and hairless men.

Another phenomenon related to the evil eye is the evil tongue. In some cultures, it is the "hot mouth" which can "cast ill through speech" (Flores-Meiser 1976:149). Here again, bearers of the evil tongue are people of special powers. Armenians have a series of proverbs passing judgment on the evil tongue. To cite just one, almost a parallel version of the above-mentioned proverb cautioning against the destructive powers of the evil eye:

Չար լեզուն աշխարհ է քանդում:
The evil tongue can destroy the world.

Many Armenian proverbs stress the magic power of the word, particularly the blessing and the curse. For a curse to be effective, it is important to be justified, for:

Անիրաւ անէծքը չի բռնի:
An unjust curse will not work.

So great is the power of the word that it can even rebound against its utterer:

Անէծքն անիծողին կը դառնայ:
The curse will return to the curser.

While not all curses are effective, some are bound to work:

Անէծքը գիրկ մը քար է. (մէկը չդպչի, միւսը կը դպչի):
Cursing is a skirtful of stones; (if one doesn't hit, another will).

In the figurative expression below, both blessing and curse are compared with a two-edged sword; i.e., they affect both the “sender” and the “receiver”:

Օրհնանքն ու անէծքը երկու բերնանի թուր է, հա՛մ դէսն է կտրում, հա՛մ դէնը:
The blessing and the curse are a two-edged sword; it cuts both ways.

The effectiveness of any curse depends on the curser. A mother's curse, for instance, is not valid.

Մօր անէծքը չի բռնի, ծծի կաթը դէմ կ'առնի:
A mother's curse won't work; the milk (she has given) from her breast will block it.

Great power is ascribed to the word of a mother, as one's closest blood relative. With her blessing, she can lift any curse:

Մօր մէկ օրհնէնքը, օխտը (եօթը) վարդապետի անէծք կը քանդէ:
A mother's blessing will lift the curse of seven priests.

By way of contrast, fathers are considered to be more distant; and consequently, their curses are effective:

Հօր ձէնն Աստուած թէյդ (չուտ) կը լսի:
God will heed a father's voice quickly.

Similarly, a proverb warns bluntly:

Հօր անէծքը կը բռնէ:
A father's curse will catch.

As in many other oriental cultures, hospitality forms a central part of the Armenian belief system and the basis for close human ties. Its cardinal rule states that:

Ղոնաղն (հիւր) Աստուծոնն աւ:
A guest is God-sent.

Failure to accept the guest into one's home will be punished by the Almighty:

Աստուծու ղոնաղին որ տունն չթողես, մէկդ էրկու չի դառնայ:
If you do not let the God-sent guest into your home, you will never amount to anything.

[Lit.:, your "one" will never become "two."]

The house that the guest enters does not belong to the host but to the guest:

Տունն իմ տունը չէ, տունը դուռ բացողինն է:
The house is not mine, it belongs to the one who opens the door (from outside).

Generosity, even in the poorest conditions, is essential:

Մի բուռ հացը ոչ ոքի չի քանդի:
A handful of bread won't ruin anybody.

However, generosity does not suffice. Since a warm reception is more important than the food offered, hosts are advised to show their guests unconditional friendliness, for:

Ղոնաղը տանտիրոջ հացին չի նայի, էրկու ունքի մէջտեղին կը նայի:

The guest doesn't look at the host's bread, but at the spot between his eyebrows.

Some domestic animals have links to folk beliefs, many of them reflected in superstitions: the mouse is unclean (in the literal as

well as spiritual sense); the raven brings bad luck, as does the goat; the swallow hints at good fortune; the sparrow who builds a nest under one's eavestrough brings bad luck:

Ծիծեռնակը տան շինութիւն է, ծիտը տան աւերութիւն է:
A swallow brings fortune to a house, a sparrow brings ruin.

The goat carries the devil in him:

Էծը սատանայ կ'ըլնի, սատանի մազ ունի:
The goat must be a devil, his shag looks like the devil's.

There are other superstitions which govern everyday life. Most of the time they are prohibitory rules expressed in imperative forms:

Չծնած երեխին չոր մի' կարի:
Do not sew clothes for an unborn child.

Երեխի եղունգն ու մազը մէկ տարի չեն կտրի:
You should not cut a baby's nails and hair for a year.

Հանք (Հանելուկ) մի' ըսէ, թանկութիւն կ'ըլլի:
Don't tell a riddle, prices will go up.

Ամանդ լպստի', որ կնիկդ սիրուն լինի:
Sop up your plate and your wife will be beautiful.

Other proverbs based on superstitions make certain predictions and are used as omens:

Կատուն թաթիկներովը երեսը լուաց, գիտցի՛ր որ անձրեւ պիտի գայ:
When the cat washes its face with its paws, know that rain will fall.

Ձեռքդ կը քերուի՝ խամեթ պիտի գայ:
If your palm is itchy, good luck is on its way.

Դատարկ կուժ եկաւ առաջի, բանդ ձախ պիտի երթայ:
If you see someone with an empty pitcher, things will go wrong.

The motive lying behind such proverbs is not always possible to ascertain. In some cases, however, the history of folk beliefs gives an explanation:

Գիշերը սուփրէն (սփռոց) չեն թափ տայ:
You should not shake out a tablecloth in the evening.

The content of this advice can become clearer in the light of an old Armenian superstition, reported in Abeghian's work: if you shake the tablecloth after sunset, the salt in your house will lose its taste and the well-being of your house will be endangered (Abeghian 1975:33).

Much more wide-spread is the sneezing superstition which, as reported by Tylor, "was not originally an arbitrary and meaningless custom, but the working out of a principle" (Tylor 1958:104 vol. 1). That principle, according to Tylor is "the ancient and savage doctrine of pervading and invading spirits, considered as good and evil." Sneezing people were thought to be blessed by the ancestral spirits, hence the physiological act was interpreted as an omen:

Գիշերուայ սաքրը խէր ա:
It's a good sign to sneeze in the evening.

Sneezing and its significance as an act of the invading spirit depending on the time of occurrence, i.e. day or night, is a fascinating anthropological topic unfortunately beyond the scope of this study.

Some other cases, which at first glance may seem obscure, can be clarified by going back to ancient medical axioms. A very valid homeopathic rule, for instance, is: cure a sore with whatever caused it (Tylor 1958:84 vol. 1). The following two Armenian proverbs comply with this rule:

Ցուրտը տարած տեղը ձիւնով ետ կու գայ:
Frostbite can be cured with snow.

Շան կծածը շան մազով կը բուժեն:
They cure the dog's bite with the dog's hair.

* * *

To conclude, a few words on the currency of Armenian proverbs are in order. In his most recent book on paremiology, Mieder (1993) addresses the currency of proverbs. He maintains that proverbs, in order to be identified as such, must show some frequency of occurrence either diachronically, namely over a certain period in history, or synchronically, i.e., at the present stage of the language. To Mieder's very apt observation, I would add that familiarity with a body of current proverbs could also be called the "proverbial competence" of a native speaker.

Currency raises many questions: how could the proverbs in the present collection be qualified as to their popularity within today's Armenia and/or outside its borders? It would not be realistic to expect that any native speaker of Armenian would be familiar with all the proverbs included in the present collection, let alone use them all in his or her daily speech. How many of these proverbs are remnants of older times and no longer in use? How many of them are part of the proverbial competence of a given native speaker in modern times? Which proverbs are very popular in Armenia, and which in the diaspora?⁴⁹ How do proverbs reflect the two different types of world-view (Levin:1968, 1969) of the divided Armenian-speaking community? What is the proverbial minimum (Permjakov:1985) of the average Armenian speaker in the East and in the West and how are the two related to each other quantitatively and qualitatively? These questions require a thorough demographic investigation.

As mentioned at the outset, Armenian proverbs come alive everyday by their usage at all levels of society in Armenia itself. To prove this no statistics are needed. We also can surmise that in rural areas of Armenia the proverbial competence of the people surpasses the competence of those in urban areas. By the same token some proverbs are more frequent in rural areas, others in urban regions.

Often originating in antiquity, the message of some proverbs can change as society evolves and words take on new meanings

(Ghanalanian 1960:XIII). Or, old words and notions which were relevant to the linguistic community that made them cease to exist, and some proverbs disappear from speech and end up in books. Recent Armenian history exemplifies this in proverbs which were created in the Soviet era and are now out of circulation. Consider the following proverb celebrating the implications which the October Revolution had for Armenian peasants:

Թագաւորը թախտից ընկաւ, կուլակը՝ բախտից:
The King lost his might, the koulak his height.*

Another proverb from the same period glorifies the work in a *kolkhoz** where people are payed by the *ashkhor**:

Աշխօր ունես, լաւ օր ունես:
If you have an ashkhor, you have a good life.*

Obviously, this type of proverb has lost its validity in today's independent Armenia. On the other hand, many ancient proverbs are very current in modern times, as was demonstrated above. They take on new meanings and are cited in new situations. Compare these two versions of the same proverb:

Շէխը գնաց, Մահմատը եկաւ:
The Sheikh left, Mahmad arrived.

Ալին եկաւ, Մուսան գնաց:
Ali came, Mousa left.

Both versions come from the violent times when Armenia was repeatedly invaded by different foreign forces. The non-Armenian names of the protagonists in the proverbs above stand for Arabic, Tatar, Mongolian and Turkish occupiers (Ghanalanian 1960:XXVI). These proverbs are used today allegorically, and with reference to unchangeable odious situations.

An even older, but current proverb is the following:

Եկողը մօրս հալն է հարցնում, հօրս հալը հարցնող չկա:
Everybody asks me about the well-being of my mother;
nobody asks about my father.

Ghanalanian traces this proverb back to matriarchal times and explains it in the following way: A mother has always been a more relevant figure in a person's life than a father, the latter being often forgotten altogether. This tendency was, of course, even more pronounced during the matriarchal order, when the mother was officially the central figure and always the subject of greater interest (Ghanalanian 1960:LI). It is also possible, and perhaps increasingly so in a patriarchal society, for this proverb to carry some sexual connotations. This high-frequency proverb, despite its seemingly impenetrable wording, is part of the proverbial competence of every native Armenian speaker, in West and East. It is cited by people who see in others a self-serving attitude. The message conveyed by this proverb could be paraphrased as: "Everybody is trying to take advantage of me; nobody is considering my interests." An arbitrary development perhaps, but one that testifies to the importance of convention in the interpretation or application of proverbs in general. To capture this prodigious wealth of meaning has been a great task for the translation of these type of proverbs.

There are in today's Armenia some proverbs, old and new, which are ubiquitous. There is hardly any native-speaker, no matter what strata he or she belongs to, who has not at some point had the urge to cite them. Some of them are based on notions which are today passé. While the processing of wool is no longer routine, at least in urban Armenia, the following proverb is very current:

Հաստ ու բարակ մի գին է, վա՛յ բարակ մանողին:
Thick or thin, it's the same pay; pity the one who spins thin all day.

This proverb, based on an old and unfair method of payment for the spinning of wool by weight rather than by thinness of the thread, shows a cynical attitude towards the injustices of life. It has been used widely in Soviet and also in post-Soviet Armenia in cases when meticulous and high-quality work succumbs to hackwork.

Another example where older ideas apply to new situations is:

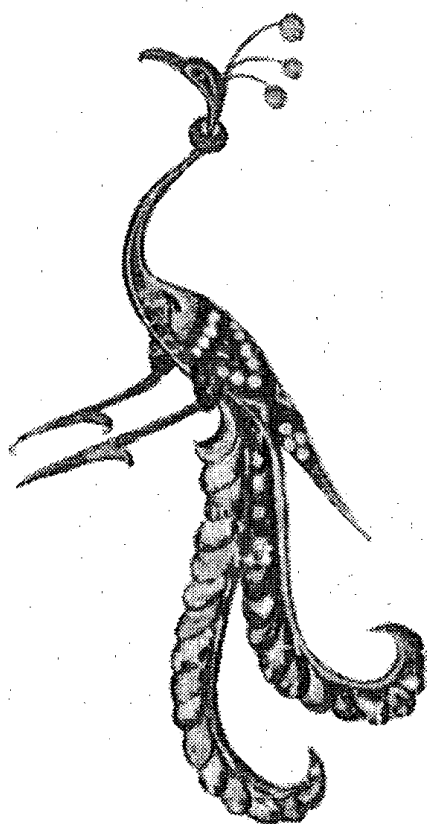
Պրծանք, ճհանտամ (հոգ չէ) թէ աղջիկ է:
We are done, who cares if it's a girl!

In Armenia, this extremely popular proverb can conclude an event which brings some relief, but is not exactly the desired outcome. The wit of this saying is based on the not yet outmoded prejudice that giving birth to a girl is not the best result. It is in today's complicated bureaucratic life that this proverb finds its place in common speech; there, success is all too often mixed with disappointment.

* * *

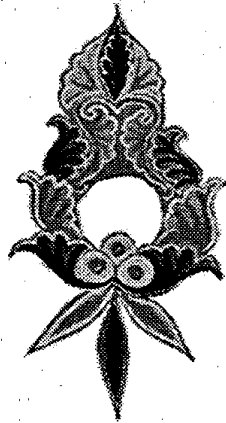
It has been my aim to give the reader both an overview of and a guide to the understanding of the Armenian world of proverbs. Having touched upon the linguistic and socio-cultural aspects of this world, I can only return to my original hope—to share with my readers my own enjoyment of its richness and perhaps even inspire some to explore its fascinating diversity still further. It is time to let this world of proverbs speak for itself in the pages that follow.

U...Z...
Anthology



I

**Մարդկային յարաբերութիւններ
և լեզուի ուժը**
Human Relations and the Power of Language



THEMES

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Բարեկամ և թշնամի
Friend and enemy

Մարդուն ընկերովը կը ճանաչեն:

A man is known by his friends.

Բարեկամ ինձի չօգնող, թշնամի չվնասող, երկուսը դոյզ մը օղ:

A friend who does not help me and an enemy who does not harm me are a pair of earrings.

Բարեկամը նեղ օրուայ համար է:

A friend is for hard times.

Լաւ օրը բարեկամ չատ կ'ըլնի:

In good times, there will be many friends.

Աղէկ օրիդ երեսիդ խնդացող չատ կ'ըլլայ:

In good times, many people will smile at you.

Ամէն բարեւ տուողի բարեկամ չեն ասի:

Not everyone who greets you, you call a friend.

Բարեկամին հացը թշնամու պէս ուտելու է:

Eat a friend's bread as if it were an enemy's.

Բարեկամին հետ կերուխում ըրէ՛, առուտուր մի՛ ըներ:

Dine with your friend, but don't deal with him.

Մի՛ ունեցիր հարիւր դահեկան, ունեցի՛ր երկու բարեկամ:

Do not have a hundred piasters, have two friends.*

Հիւանդանաս, տոստ ու տուշմանդ իմանաս:

When you fall ill, you'll know your friends and foes.

Ըսէ՛ ընկերդ ով է, որ ըսեմ դուն ով ես:

Tell me who your friend is and I will tell you who you are.

Բաղումս ծիրան կայ, բարեւ տալ կայ, բաղումս ծիրան
չկայ, բարեւ տալ չկայ:

*If there are apricots in my orchard, people greet me; if there is
none, no one greets me.*

Հասած ծիրան - բաց բերան:
Apricots ripened, mouths opened.

Մարդի աչքը խորունկ փորոզը իր բարեկամն է:
It's your friend who will bore through your eye.

Ով առանց պակասութեան բարեկամ կը փնտռէ, առանց
բարեկամի կը մնայ:

*He who looks for a friend without faults will stay without
friends.*

Քեզ չուզեմ, քենէ չզատուիմ:
I don't love you, I don't leave you.

Հին բարեկամը տուշման չի դառնայ:
An old friend will never turn into an enemy.

Բարեկամ կայ սրտի, բարեկամ կայ փորի:
There are bosom buddies, there are drinking buddies.

Բարեկամը չերթալ-չգալով եաղայացաւ (օտարացաւ),
եաղը (օտարը) երթալ-գալով բարեկամացաւ:

*Friends become strangers when they meet rarely, strangers
become friends when they meet daily.*

Մէկ տեսնելիս բարեկամ, երկու տեսնելիս՝ աղբէր:
You meet once, it's 'friend'; you meet twice, it's 'brother'.

Բարեկամդ գլխիդ կը նայի, թշնամիդ՝ ոտքիդ:
A friend looks at your head, an enemy at your feet.

Ձեռքը ձեռք կը լուանայ, երկուսն երես:
One hand washes the other hand, and both wash the face.

Հաւքը թեւով կը թռչի, մարդը՝ բարեկամով:
Birds fly with their wings, people with their friends.

Լաւ է խելացի թշնամին, քան անխելք բարեկամը:
Better to have an intelligent enemy, than a dumb friend.

Լացացնողիդ մօտը գնա, ծիծաղացնողիդ մօտը մի՛ գնա:
Go to those who make you cry; don't go to those who make you laugh.

Գնա՛ չէնը, որ շինուիս. մի՛ երթա աւերը, որ աւերիս:
Go to the prosperous to prosper; don't go to the perished to perish.

Ընկերիդ խօսքին հաւատա՛, էլի պինդ կաց քո բանին:
Listen to what your friend has to say, but still do it your way.

Թշնամուս թշնամին բարեկամս է:
My enemy's enemy is my friend.

Ընկերով մահը հարսանիք է:
With friends, even death is (like) a wedding.

Ուրիշը ուրիշ է *Strangers are strangers*

Ուրիշին համար լացողին աչքը արցունք չի գար:
He who cries for others will have no tears.

Ուրիշին համար լացողը իրեն աչքերէն կը զրկուի:
He who cries for others will cry out his eyes.

Ուրիշին աչքը քեզ լոյս չի տար:
Somebody else's eyes will not give you sight.

Ուրիշի վրայ յոյս դնողը, աղքատ կը լինի:
He who relies on others stays poor.

Ուրիշի հացին իւղ քսող չի լինի:
No one will spread butter on other people's bread.

Քու մի կովը լաւ ա, քանց հարեւանիդ տասը:
Your lone cow is of more use to you than your neighbor's ten.

Իմ խրճիթը լաւ է, քան ուրիշի պալատը:
My hut is better for me than someone else's castle.

Լաւին սիրոյն կը հանդուրժուի գէշը
For the sake of the good, the bad is tolerated

Վարդ սիրողը փուշն էլ կը սիրի:
He who likes roses must like thorns as well.

Շանը քարով չեն տայ, տիրոջը խաթրը կ'անեն:
Don't stone a dog, honor its master.

Ձուածեղի սիրուն թաւայի պոչն են պաշտում:
For the sake of the omelette, they kiss the handle of the pan.

Խաւիժի սիրուն տապակի տակն են լիզում:
For the sake of the khavits, they lick the bottom of the pan.*

Մէկ աչքի սիրուն մարդ հազար աչք կը սիրէ:
For the sake of one eye, they cherish a thousand eyes.

Էշը որ արժէք չունի, էշատէրը հո ունի:
If the donkey isn't valued, his owner surely is.

Նմանները կը սիրեն զիրար
Similar people like each other

Նմանը նմանին կը սիրէ:
Like attracts like.

Չուրի (մինչեւ) չնամնի, չի խնամի:
If they don't match, they won't make a match.

Նմանը նմանին, սատանան ու իր խնամին:
Like protects like, as the devil his tribe [lit.: his in-laws].

Գողը դարան կ'ըլլայ գողին:
One thief hides the other.

Շունը չան միս չի ուտի:
A dog doesn't eat another dog's flesh.

Ագռաւը ագռաւի աչքը չի հանի:
A raven won't pluck out another raven's eye.

Էծը (այծը) իծի համար լաւ է, քանց մի սուրու ոչխարը:
To a goat, another goat is better than a herd of sheep.

Աղուէսէն վկայ ուղեցին, իր պոչը ցոյց տուեց:
When asked for a witness, the fox showed his tail.

Գփի համար մի գիժը լաւ ա, քանց թէ հազար խելօքը:
To a fool, another fool is better than a thousand wise men.

Գլորաւ խուփը, գտաւ պտուկը:
The lid rolled down and found its pot.

Ամէն հաւք հետ իր երամի:
Every bird belongs to its own flock.

Էշը եզան հետ չեն լծի:
They do not hitch a donkey next to an ox.

Շուներ իրար հետ կռուում են, գէլի դէմը միանում:
Dogs fight with each other, yet unite against the wolf.

Ֆիադան (հետիոտն) ձիաւորին ընկեր չի:
A pedestrian cannot be a rider's companion.

Նմանները զիրար չեն սիրեր
Similarity conflicts

Շուներ չան վրայ չատ կը հաջէ:
A dog will always bark at another dog.

Արհեստաւորը արհեստաւորին ծուռ կ'աչայ (կը նայի):
One tradesman can't stand another tradesman.

Շանը չնով խեղդէլ կու տան:
To strangle a dog, they use another dog.

Դրացիներ
Neighbors

Մօտիկ հարեւանը լաւ ա, քանց հեռու բարեկամը:⁵⁰
A close neighbor is better than a distant relative.

Հարեւանի հետ կախուէլն էլ խաղ ու պար է:
Even to be hanged with neighbors is like singing and dancing.

Վատ հարեւանը հարեւանին հաճաթատէր (գործիքի տէր)
ա. արեր:

A bad neighbor makes you become the owner of tools.

[You cannot borrow tools from a bad neighbor, so you buy them. Message: Associations with bad people can also have their advantages.]

Տուն մի՛ գնիր, դրացի գնիր:
Don't buy a house, buy a neighbor.

Դրկցի չանը քար չեն գցի, տիրոջ խաթրը կը պահեն:
Do not stone a neighbor's dog, respect the owner.

Հարեւանդ վատ ա, փախի պրծի:
If your neighbor is no good, move away.

Դրացիիդ հարսնիք է նէ, դուռդ մեծ բաց:

If your neighbor is having a wedding, keep your doors wide open.

Դրացիդ խաղաղ, տունդ էլ խաղաղ:

When neighbors are peaceful, your home is also peaceful.

Հարուստ հարեւանը օգուտ է:

Having rich neighbors is beneficial.

Դրկիցը դրկիցին նայելով ջանը կրակը կը գցէ:

If you do what your neighbor does, you get yourself into trouble.

Դրկցի աշխատանքին, ոչ թէ ունեցածին տենչա:

Aspire to your neighbor's hard work, not to his wealth.

Ջուրդ որ աւելնայ, առաջ դրկցիդ ծառի տակ կապի, յետոյ ուրիշի տուր:

If you have had enough (irrigation) water, channel it first to your neighbor's trees, and then give it to others.

[Scarce irrigation water is allotted to every family in turn.
Message: Accommodating your immediate neighbors should be a priority.]

Հարեւանը հարեւանի հայելին է:

One neighbor is the mirror of another.

Հարեւանի շունն էլ լաւ պիտի ըլնի:

Even the neighbor's dog should be nice.

Փորի հետ հաշտ եղողը դրկցի հետ խոռով կ'ըլի:

He who is on good terms with his stomach, will not be on good terms with his neighbors.

[i.e., Greedy neighbors are not popular.]

Անարժանները վնասակար են
The worthless are harmful

Ցուան կովը նախրի անունը կ'աւիրէ:
A cruppy cow will defame the whole herd.

Մէկը հազարի անունն է կոտորէ:
One person can defame thousands.

Մէկ մուկը օխտը (եօթը) կարաս կը մոնտարէ:
One mouse can taint seven barrels.

Պզտիկ մուկը մեծ ամաններ կը մնտրէ:
A little mouse can dirty big containers.

**Ճանճը մի բան չի, համա որ ընկնում ա թանի մէջ,
 մոնտարում ա:**
The fly is small but when it falls into the tan, it spoils it all.*

Մրջիւնը պզտիկ ա, համա ասլանի ականջն ա մտնում:
The ant is tiny, but enters the lion's ear.

Գայլուն տեսածը տիրուն խէր չկայ:
What the wolf has seen is lost for the owner.

Ագռաւին տեսած սերմը չի կանաչնար:
Sown grain will not grow if the raven has seen it.

Վա՛յ քեզ քաղաք, թագաւորդ մանուկ է:
I pity you, city, your king is a child.
 [Said when people hold a high position undeservedly.]

Արծուի շինած, մկների քանդած:
What the eagle built, the mice will destroy.

Սարսաղի ձեռից սարեկները սարը կը փախչեն:
Because of a fool, the finches fly away to the mountains.

Կռիւ եւ անմիաբանութիւն
Quarrel and disagreement

Կրակն ու բամպակը մէկտեղ չեն կենար:
Fire and cotton can't stay in the same place.

Կռուի վերջը փոշմանութիւն ա:
Fighting ends in regret.

Մարդի հետ կռուելիս, վերջի բանը միտք արա:
When you quarrel with someone, think of the outcome.

Մարդուս զրուցարնկեր ալ պէտք է, կռուարնկեր ալ:
One needs friends both for chatting and for fighting.

Ո՛չ առաջ կաթն ու կորեկ, ո՛չ վերջը թուր ու դանակ:
Neither milk and millet first, nor sabre and knife thereafter.
[i.e., A good reception is worthless if a fight follows.]

Կանանց կռուելը դարնան անձրեւ է:
Women's fighting is like spring rain.
[Basis for comparison: spring rain is strong, but short.]

Ուզածը ասողը չուզածը կը լսի:
He who says what he wants will hear what he doesn't want.

Ծիծը որ ծիծ ա, ծոցումը իրար կը կպչի:
Even breasts rub against each other.
[i.e., Friction is part of life.]

Գրքին երկու երեսն ալ կարդարու է:
One should read both sides of a book.
[Advice to be impartial]

Խօսքը թաք (կենտ) չի ըլլի, չի ֆթ (զոյգ) կ'ըլլի:
Words do not come from one side, they come from both sides.
[i.e., It takes two, not one, for an argument.]

Իշի քացուց չեն խռովի:
Don't take offense at a donkey's kick.

Իմ ու քուն, տուն է քանդում:
The "mine" and the "yours" can destroy a house.

Հիւր եւ հիւրասիրութիւն *Guests and hospitality*

Ղոնաղն (հիւր) Աստծունն ա:
A guest is God-sent.

Հացի կտրածը թուրը չի կտրի:
What the bread can carve, the sword can't.

Լեզուն մէկ կը խօսայ, հացը՝ երկուս:
The tongue says one, the bread says two.
[i.e., Food is the most essential part of hospitality.]

Առաջ հաց, յետոյ հարց:
First the bread, then the talking.
[i.e., When you have guests, feeding them should be a priority.]

Ղոնաղը տանտիրոջ վարդն ա:
A guest is a host's rose.

Ղոնաղը տանտիրոջ էչն ա, որտեղ ուզի կը կապի:
For the host, a guest is a donkey; he (the host) ties him up where he wishes.

Ղոնաղն եկաւ, Ղոնաղը գնաց, տեղը դատարկ չմնաց:
The guest arrived, the guest left; his absence was not felt.

Սոխ ու հաց, սիրտդ բաց:
Onion and bread, but an open heart.

Գարի հաց, պարզ երես:
Barley bread, but a proud face.

Իրան ուտով եկած ղոնաղը, պատիւ չի ունենայ:
An uninvited guest won't get much attention.

Ղոնաղը ղոնաղին չէր սիրում, տանտէրը երկուսին էլ:
One guest hated the other; the host hated both.

Ղոնաղը որ համբերի, տանտէրը հաց կը բերի:
If the guest can wait, the host will bring the bread [i.e. food].

Չկանչած տեղը կերուխումի չերթաս:
Do not go to a feast uninvited.

Չկանչած հիւրը փուշի վրայ կը նստի:
An uninvited guest will sit on thorns.

Ուշ եկող միսաֆիրը (հիւր) ինչ գտնէ, ան կ'ուտէ:
A late guest must eat what he finds.

էն տունը քանդուի, որ ղոնաղ չի գայ. էն ղոնաղն էլ
մեռնի, որ իրիկունը չի գայ, առաւօտն երթայ:
Damn that house that has no guests; damn that guest who comes at night and doesn't leave the next day.

Կերթայ հուրը (հիւր), կը մնայ մուրը:
The guest will go away, but the soot will stay.

Ղոնաղի խաթրու կատուին փի'շտ չեն ասի:
For the guest's sake, don't shoo even the cat away.
[i.e., The host should not show the least sign of hostility.]

Հիւր պատուողն ու անպատուողը տան տիկինն ա:
It's the hostess who treats or mistreats the guest.

Մի բուռ հացը ոչ ոքի չի քանդի:
A piece of bread won't ruin anybody.

Աղն ու հացը քարն էլ կ'իմանայ:
Even a stone will remember bread and salt.
 [Bread and salt symbolize hospitality.]

Բարեկամդ շատ արա, հիւրասենեակդ մի՛ն արա:
Have many friends, but only one guest-room.

Կոտիկ-կոտիկ եղ ունեմ, ամէն մարդի տեղ ունեմ:
My butter dish is a tiny one, but I have room for everyone.

Աստծոյ ղոնաղին (հիւր) որ ներս չթողես, մինդ երկու չի
 դառնայ:
If you do not let the God-sent guest in, you will not amount to anything.

Ինչ ուզէ էլը (օտար) բերի, տանտիրոջ աղը շատ կ'երթայ:
Whatever the guest brings along, the host will spend a lot of salt.

[i.e., Regardless of the guests' contributions, the host is the main provider.]

Տունն իմ տունը չէ, տունը դուռ բացողինն է:
The house is not mine; it belongs to the one who opens the door (from outside).

Բեռով եկած ղոնաղի լեզուն երկայն կ'ըլնի:
A guest who arrives with a big load can talk big.

Կատուին ծեծեմ, հիւրն ատեմ:
I hit the cat, (when) I hate the guest.

Ջրի պէս կ'երթայ, աւաղի պէս կը մնայ:
He goes like the water, he stays like the sand.
 [About guests who talk about leaving, but never do.]

Երդն օտարին է, մարազը՝ քուկդ:
The loft is for the guest, the hayloft for you.
 [i.e., Guests are given the main premises.]

Ղոնաղը տանտիրոջ հացին չի նայի, երկու ունքի մէջտեղին կը նայի:

The guest doesn't look at the host's bread, but at the spot between his eyebrows.

[For the guest, a warm reception is more important than the food offered; he therefore carefully watches his host's mood.]

Հացդ դիր հացիս վրէն, հա՛մ տակիցը կեր, հա՛մ վրայիցը:

Put your bread on my bread, and eat once from the bottom, once from the top.

[A guest ought to contribute to the food offered by the host.]

Սէր

Love

Առջի սէր, առջի բարի:

First love, first goodness.

Սրտի ուզածը սիրուն կ'ըլնի:

What the heart desires is beautiful.

Սրտէ ի սիրտ ճամբայ կայ:

From heart to heart there is a path.

Սէրը կոյր է:

Love is blind.

Սէրը սիրով կ'ըլնի, քաշքշելով բան չի դառնայ:

Love must be agreed upon, not forced upon.

Լաւ է սրտով առածը, քան թէ խաչով, թագով պսակածը:

Better to marry for love than to be wed with cross and crown.

Սէրը երկու կողմէն ըլլալու է:

Love must come from both sides.

**Սէր չ'իբրիշկայ (չի նայի) հայ ու տաճիկ, ճիկար
չ'իբրիշկայ լաճ ու աղջիկ, խելք չ'իբրիշկայ մեծն ու պզտիկ:**

Love doesn't see Armenian or Turk; family doesn't see boy or girl; brain doesn't see old or young.

Ջաղացքը երկու քարէն, սէրն երկու գլխէն:

A mill needs two stones, love needs two heads.

**Թելի կտրուածը կը կապուի, սիրոյ կտրուածը չի
կապուիր:**

When yarn is torn, you can tie it; when love is torn, you can't.

Սէրը որ կայ, անմարելի կրակ է:

Love is an everlasting fire.

Մարդն մարդու պէտք ունի

People need each other

Մարդս մարդով է շէն:

People are merry with people.

Մարդը մարդով է մարդ:

People feel like people when they are together.

Մէկը մէկով, երկուսն Աստծով:

One person (is merry) with another, and both with God.

Սարը սարին չի հանդիպի, մարդ մարդու կը հանդիպի:

Mountains do not meet each other, but people do.

Մենակ հարսը տղայ չի բերի:

A single bride will not give birth.

Լաւ է գեղով գերի երթալ, քան մենակ հարսնիք երթալ:

Better to go to captivity with the whole village, than to go to a wedding alone.

*Մի խելքը լաւ ա, երկուսը՝ աւելի:
One brain is good; two are better.*

*Դժոխք գնացողը ընկեր չատ կ'ուզէ:
He who goes to hell will badly need friends.*

*Անտէր գառը գայլը կ'ուտէ:
An unguarded lamb the wolf will devour.*

*Մարդամիջի մարդ ունենամ, հազարներով պարտք
ունենամ:
Let me have lots of friends, let me have lots of debts.*

*Մինակուսութիւնը Աստծուն կը վայլէ:
Solitude suits only God.*

***Խօսք ու գործ
Word and deed***

*Խօսքը ասելը չի, անելն է:
It's the doing, not the talking, that matters.*

*Ըսելու և ընելու մէջ սար ու ձոր կայ:
Between talking and doing there are mountains and valleys.*

*Խօսքով փիլաւ չի եփուի, իւղ ու բրինձ է հարկաւոր:
You cannot cook pilaf* with words; you need butter and rice.*

*Ասելը հեշտ է, անելը դժուար:
It is easier said than done.*

*«Պալքին» (գուցէ) ցանել են, չի բուսել:
They planted the "perhaps" but it didn't grow.*

*Բերաննին լեցուն է, փորերնին՝ պարապ:
Their mouths are full, their bellies are empty.*

Անողը պրծաւ, ասողը՝ ոչ:

He who did it, got away; he who said it, didn't.

**Խօսիլ և լռել
Speaking and being silent**

Խօսքը արծաթ է, լռութիւնը՝ ոսկի:

Speaking is silver, silence is gold.

Ժամանակ կայ լռելը ոսկի է, խօսելը արծաթ, ժամանակ էլ կայ, խօսելը ոսկի է, լռելը արծաթ:

At times, silence is gold and speaking is silver; at times, speaking is gold and silence is silver.

Հարցնելով Երուսաղէմ կ'երթան:

By asking (directions) you can get (all the way) to Jerusalem.

Նետն ու խօսքը դուրս թռչելէն վերջ, ալ ետ չեն դառնար:

Arrows and words once released do not return.

Խօսքը քանի բերանդ է, քուկդ է. բերնէդ ելաւ, քուկդ չէ:

While still in your mouth, words are yours; once out, they are no longer yours.

Ամէն մէկ խօսքդ մէկ ջաւահիր (դոհար) արժի, ամա ու՞մ ես ասում:

Each of your words is a jewel; but to whom do you offer them?

Բանը կը հանէ սրտի դամբ:

Words can draw nails from the heart.

[i.e., Words can ease pain.]

Հենց խօսք կայ, որ մի փութ մեղրով չի ուտուի:

There are words you cannot swallow even with a pout of honey.*

Ձուկը թողո՞ւմ (տուկան) էն որսում, մարդը՝ խօսքով:
A fish you catch in a net; a man, in his words.

Թռկի երկարն է լաւ, խօսքի՝ կարճը:
The rope should be long, the words short.

Առաջնախօսը չգիտի, թէ վերջնախօսի փորում ինչ կայ:
He who speaks first doesn't know what he who will speak last has got up his sleeve [lit.: ... "in his belly"].

Մնջի լեզուն տէրը կը հասկնայ:
The deaf-mute's language only his caretaker will understand.

Բանը ասելէն գլուխ կը գայ:
Talk about things and they will happen.

Բերանը սրտի թարգմանն է:
The mouth is the heart's interpreter.

Առակը կ'ասեն, որ լսեն:
Wise words [lit.: a fable] are said to be heard.

Աղջիկս քեզ ըսեմ, հարսս դու'ն հասկցիր:
My daughter, I say it to you; my daughter-in-law, it's meant for you.

[It's easier to make remarks to those close to you. The proverb is used when an awkward remark must be passed on to somebody else.]

Ջարկ զթամբը, որ իմանայ էշակը:
Whip the saddle, for the donkey to understand.

Ներսուկ քեզ կ'ըսեմ, դուրսիկ դու'ն լսէ:
Insider, I say it to you; outsider, it's meant for you.

էշիկ, քեզ ասիմ, մարդուկ, դու'ն լսի:
Donkey, I say it to you; little man, it's meant for you.

Լեզուի մասին
About the tongue

Լեզուի պարտքը խելք (բարի) խօսալն է:
The tongue's duty is to speak goodness.

Թրի կտրածը կը լաւանայ, լեզուի կտրածը չի լաւանայ:
A wound by the sword will heal, a wound by the tongue won't.

Լեզուն ոսկոր չունի. բայց շատ ոսկորներ կը ջարդէ:
A tongue has no bone, but it breaks many bones.

Լեզուս կ'ըսէ, սիրտս՝ ոչ:
My tongue says it, my heart doesn't.

Սիրտն էրուի, ու լեզուն խօսի:
The heart must burn, for the tongue to speak.

Օձի կծածը կը սաղանայ, լեզուի կծածը չի սաղանայ:
What is bitten by a snake will heal, what is bitten by a tongue will not.

Գէշ կէ՛ր, գէշ մի՛ ըսեր:
Eat bad things, don't say bad things.

Գէշ լեզուն ածելուց սուր է:
A mean tongue is worse than a razor blade.

Զար լեզուն աշխարհ է քանդում:
The evil tongue is destroying the world.

Ոտքով ընկնողը կ'ելնայ, լեզուով ընկնողը չ'ելնայ:
He who falls by his feet will rise, he who falls by his tongue will not.

Երկար լեզուն կարճ կ'ընէ կեանքը:
A long tongue shortens life.

*Զեռս ցաւայ լաւ ա, քանց բերանս:
Better my hands ache, than my mouth.*

[Message 1: Better I do a chore myself than explain it to someone. Message 2: Better I discipline physically than with words.]

*Խօսք կայ, սարի գլուխը կը հանի, խօսք կայ, սարից
ներքէ կը բերէ:*

*Some words will take you to the top of the mountain, others
will bring you down.*

*Խօսք կայ, բան կը շինէ, խօսք կայ, բան կը քանդէ:
Some words are constructive, some are destructive.*

*Հօ՛ կայ դուրս կը տանի, հօ՛ կայ ներս կը բերի:
Some "ho" sends you in, some "ho" sends you out.
["ho" is an exclamation addressed to the cattle.]*

*«Սղորմի հոգուն» կայ, որ «չան որդի» ասելուց վատ է:
There is some blessing which sounds worse than some cursing.
[Lit.: There is some "(God) bless his soul" which is worse
than to say "son of a dog."]*

*Մինչեւ թուրը եկաւ, լեզուն գլուխը կտրեց:
By the time the sword arrived, the tongue had chopped the
head off.*

*Թուրը մէկ մարդ սպանեց, լեզուն՝ մի բանակ:
The sword killed one man, the tongue an army.*

*Խենդին սիրտը լեզուին վրայ է, խելացիի լեզուն՝ սրտին
վրայ:
A madman's heart is on his tongue; a wise man's tongue is on
his heart.*

*Ագռաւի բերնով ամէն օր ձիւն կու գայ:
If it rests with the raven's mouth, everyday snow will fall.
[i.e., If it were up to the pessimist, only evil things would
happen.]*

Աշխարհքի շինողն ու քանդողը լեզուն է:
It's the tongue that builds or destroys the world.

Հասարակական կարծիք և բամբասանք
Public opinion and gossip

Եղբ սատկի, կաշին կը մնայ, տղամարդը մեռնի՝ անունը:
When an ox dies, its skin remains; when a man dies, his name remains.

Մարդու աչքը դուրս գայ լաւ է, քան անունը:
It's better to lose your eye than your name.

Բերնէ բերան, կ'ըլլայ գերան:
From mouth to mouth it goes, and on and on it grows.

Բերնէ բերան, հազար բերան:
From mouth to mouth, to a thousand mouths.

Ամէն բերան տոպրակ չի, որ կարես:
Not everybody's mouth is a sack you can sew shut.

Մինչեւ մի բան չըլնի, երկու չեն ասի:
They wouldn't tell two stories, if there weren't one.

Պօսքի սուտը չի լինի, սխալը կը լինի:
Rumors are not false, only faulty.

Երեք օրուայ վրայ երեքը գիտէ, երեք օրուայ ետնէն,
աշխարհքը գիտէ:

Within three days three people will know the news; thereafter, the whole world.

Շտապով գնամ, գիտ կ'ասեն, կամաց գնամ, էշ կ'ասեն:
I run in haste, they call me crazy; I walk with ease, they call me lazy.

Թող իմ փորը կուչտ լինի, թող ասեն անօթի շուն:
Let my stomach be full, let them call me a hungry fool.
 [Lit.: ... “a hungry dog.”]

Տուր ուտեմ, ետեւէս գողա «անօթի՛ շուն»:
Feed me, and (I don't care if you) call after me “hungry dog.”

Առաջ անունդ դառ հանիր, յետոյ գէլ դառ՝ կեր:
*First make a name for yourself as a lamb, then become a wolf
 and devour.*

Մի տարի գառնութիւն արա, եօթ տարի գէլութիւն, էլի
 գառնութիւնդ կ'ասեն:
*Be a lamb for one year, a wolf for ten; still you will be known
 as a lamb.*

Գէլի անունն է դուրս եկել, աղուէսը աշխարհը քանդեց:
While the wolf is held in ill repute, the fox destroys the world.

Լաւ է անուն բարի քան գանձ աշխարհի:
Better to have a good name than all the treasures of the world.

Քարի տակ կը մնայ, խօսքի տակ չի մնար:
He would rather bear rocks than words [i.e., criticism].

Քաքի տակ կը մնայ, խօսքի տակ չի մնայ:
He would rather take shit, than words [i.e., criticism].

Ականջդ կտրէ՛, ետեւդ ձգէ:
Cut off your ear, and throw it behind you!
 [i.e., Listen to what people say behind your back!]

Խալիս ասա-կօսէն ո՞վ կու մոռնջ կացնէ:
Who can stop the rumors of the people?

Շունն է հաջեր, հովն է փչեր:
The dog barked, the wind blew.
 [“Barking” stands for gossip, slander or rumor.]

Բամբասանք չէ, բանն ասանկ է:
It's not slander, it's just candor.

Բամբասանքն որ կայ, դատարկ հրացան է:
Gossip is a gun without bullets.

Բամբասողը ընկոյղի տոպրակ է, ինչքան շարժես, ձայն կը
հանի:
Gossip is like a walnut bag; the more you shake it, the more
noise it makes.

Սոխը քանի կեղուես, կը կեղուի:
The more you peel an onion, the more it peels.

Լուր առ տղայէն, խեւէն և կնիկ մարդէն:
Get the news from a child, a madman or a woman.

Փսփսոցը տուն կը քանդի:
Whispering can destroy a house.

Պատն ականջ ունի:
Walls have ears.

Իմ բանը աջ (յաջող) ա, ով ուզու՞մ ա թող հաջայ:
As long as I do well, let anybody yell.

Գէշ խօսքը քամին կը տանի:
Rumors vanish with the wind.

Շունը հաջերով եկեղեցին չի մոռնառի (պղծի):
A dog cannot desecrate a church by barking at it.

Շունը կը հաջէ, քարաւանը կը քոչէ:
The dog barks, the caravan moves on.

Աղիին աղի կ'ըսեն, անլիին՝ անլի:
They call the salty, salty; the saltless, saltless.
[i.e., One should call things by their names.]

Շուներ հաջէր, արտը կանաչէր:
The dog barked, the field prospered.

Գայլը քաղցածուիցէնէ չէ կրցած քալել, ըսեր են. «Տեսէ՛ք, այնչափ կերեր է, որ չի կրնար քալել»:
When a starving wolf could not walk, they said, "See, he is so full that he can no longer move."

Միրուք չունեմ, խօսքս չի անց կենում:
I have no beard, my words have no sway.
[A beard indicates status and authority.]

Շիտակ խօսքը կատակով կ'ասեն:
Truth is told in a joke.

Հանաք կա՞յ, որ կէսը ղորդ (ճշմարիտ) չըլնի:
Is there any joke without half of it being true?

Հանաքը բամպակ ա, որ շատ բարակ մանեմ կը կտրի:
A joke is like cotton; if you spin it thin, it breaks.

Հանաքը դանակ կը դառնայ:
A joke can turn into a poke.

Լաւ է մի անգամ տեսնես, քան հարիւր անգամ լսես:
It's better to see once, than to hear a hundred times.

Շան հաջելովը ծովը չի կեղտոտի:
The sea won't get soiled by the bark of a dog.

Ալիւրէ տոպրակը քանի թոթուես փոշի կ'ելլէ:
The more you shake a flour sack, the more dust falls off.

Քաքը քանի քրքրես, հոտը վեր կը գայ:
The more you stir the shit, the more it stinks.

Կո՛ւ գա՛ն, երբ անո՛ւննի՛ն կո՛ւ տաս
They appear when you speak about them

Անո՛ւնը տո՛ւ՛ր, սո՛ւփրէ՛ն (սեղան) գցա՛:
Call his name, set the table!

Անո՛ւնը տո՛ւած, տեղը դրած:
They uttered his name, and he came.

Շո՛ւնը յիշէ, փայտը քաշէ:
Think of the dog, swing the rod.

Աղէկ մարդը խօսքի վրայ կո՛ւ գայ:
Good people arrive when you mention their name.

Ըսածդ գիտցի՛ր
Watch what you say

Շատ գիտես, քիչ խօսա:
If you know much, speak little.

Շատ տեսնում ես, քիչ ասա:
If you see much, say little.

Քիչ խօսա, շատ լսի:
Speak little, listen a lot.

Սիրտը սփռոց չէ, որ ամէն մարդի առաջ բաց անես:
A heart is not a tablecloth to spread out in front of everyone.

Լեզուիդ չափ ու չուան դիր:
Curb your tongue!

Մեծ բրդում կեր, մեծ մի՛ խօսի:
Have a big bite, but don't talk big.

Երկու ականջ, մէկ բերան, իմացիր խօսքիդ սիրան (կարգ):
Two ears, one mouth; don't be a blabbermouth!

[Lit.: Two ears, one mouth, know when it is your turn to speak.]

Աչքովդ տես, փէշովդ ծածկէ:
See it with your eyes, hide it with your skirt.

Գիտեցածը ամէն մարդի չեն ասի:
You should not tell everybody what you know.

Վերջին գաւաթը մի՛ խմեր, վերջին պատառը մի՛ ուտեր, վերջին խօսքը մի՛ ըսեր:

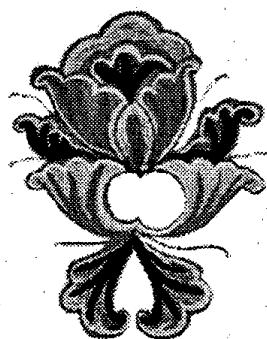
Do not drink the last cup, do not eat the last bite, do not say the last word.

Ամէն խոստովանանք տէրտէրոջը չ'ըսուիր:
Not everything can be confessed to the priest.

Տանու խօսքը դուրս չպէտք է գալ:
What is said within a home should never go without.

Ներսը ըսին քրդերը, դուրսը՝ քրդան ճագերը:
The Kurds said it inside, their young said it outside.

II
Պատուիրաններ
Commandments



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COMMANDMENTS

Մի՛ գողնար **Do not steal**

Գողութիւնը չունի թողութիւն:
Theft will never be forgiven.

Գողը գողէն գողացաւ, Աստուած տեսաւ՝ զարմացաւ:
A thief stole from another thief, God saw it with disbelief.

**Գողութիւնով հարստանալ լինէր, մուկը բոլորից հարուստ
կը լինէր:**
If stealing made one rich, the mouse would be the richest.

Ձուի գողը ձի էլ կը գողանայ:
He who steals an egg will steal a horse.

Հաւկիթի գողը հաւ ալ կը գողնայ:
He who steals an egg will steal a hen.

Գողը մէկի մեղքն ա տանում, կորցնողը՝ հազարի:
A thief wrongs one person, the robbed a thousand.
[The robbed will suspect many.]

Մուտ մի՛ խօսիր **Do not lie**

Մուտ ասողի տունը կրակ ընկաւ, չհաւատացին:
A liar's house caught fire and nobody believed him.

Մուտ խօսողի լեզուն կարճ կը լինի:
A liar should hold his tongue.

**Մուտ խօսողի վաստակն էն է, որ ճիշտն էլ ասի, չեն
հաւատար:**
*All the liar earned from lying is that nobody believes him,
even when he tells the truth.*

Սուտը սուտ ասողի տունն է քանդում:
Lies ruin the home of a liar.

Էնենց (այնպէս) սուտ ասա, որ ճիշտը կողքին պզգի:
Tell such a lie that the truth could settle nearby.

Ծուռ նստինք, շիտակ խօսինք:
Let's sit crooked, but speak straight.

Շիտակ պատը չի փլչիւր:
A straight wall will never fall.

Շիտակ մարդը ծուռ բան չի սիրեր, ծուռին ալ շիտակ
չըսեր:
*A straight person doesn't like crooked things, nor does he call
crooked things straight.*

Հազար սուտ մէկ զորդ (ճամարտութիւն) չարժեր:
A thousand lies aren't worth a single truth.

Սուտը ճամբայ չունի:
A lie has no way out.

Ստի ոտները կարճ են:
Lies have short legs.

Սուտը կը ոտնաւորի, բայց առաջ չի գնայ:
The lie may grow legs, but will never get ahead.

Մի՛ ըներ անօրինութիւն
Do no wrong

Մ'ըներ անօրէն, կը գտնաս Երկնաւորէն:
Do no wrong, the Almighty will pay you before long.

Լաւ կ'անես, քեզ կ'անես, վատ կ'անես, քեզ կ'անես:
You do good, it's for you; you do bad, it's for you.

Առաջ ասեղը քեզ խրէ, նոր (յետոյ) ուրիշին:
Stick the needle first into yourself, then into others.

***Լաւութիւն ըրէ
Do good for people***

*Անուշ հոտը վարդուց կ'ուզեն, մարդկութիւնը մարդուց
կ'ուզեն:*
Sweet scent is expected from roses, humanness from humans.

*Աղէկութիւն ըրէ, ծովը թափէ. ծովը չբերէ նէ, ալիքը կը
բերէ:*
*Do good and throw it into the sea; if the sea does not return it
to you, the waves will.*
[i.e., Good deeds will be acknowledged somehow.]

*Լաւութիւն արա, ջուրը գցի. ձուկը չիմանայ, Աստուած
կ'իմանայ:*
Do good, throw it into the sea; if the fish don't notice, God will.

*Մարդ որ իրան վնաս չտայ, չի կարող ուրիշին լաւութիւն
անի:*
If you don't harm yourself, you cannot do good to others.

***Եղի՛ր աշխատասէր և հետեւողական
Be diligent and persistent***

Աշխատանքը սարեր կը հաւասարեցնի:
Work can level mountains.

Աշխատողը անօթի չի մնար:
He who works will never starve.

Բանը որ չվերցնես տասը մատով, կը մնայ տասը տարով:
If you don't grab the job with ten fingers [i.e., both hands], it
will stay for ten years.

Էսօրուայ գործը վաղուան մի՛ թող:
Don't leave today's work for tomorrow.

Սրտով քարի վրայ էլ գնաս, կը կանաչի:
Even a stone will thrive if you step on it wholeheartedly.

Ծառը մի խփելով չի վէր ընկնի:
No tree will fall with just one blow.

Կաթ-կաթ ջուրը քարը կը փորէ:
Dripping water wears away stone.

Կաթիլ-կաթիլ գէօլ (լիճ) կ'եղնի:
Constant dripping makes a lake.

Շուտ վեր կացողը շառից (փորձանք) կ'ազատի:
He who gets up early keeps out of trouble.

Գործը իշու պէս բան է, նստար՝ կ'երթայ, իջար՝ կը կայնի:
Work is like a donkey; you sit on it, it goes, you get off, it stops.

Աստծուն խնդրի, համա բաճը ձեռքից վար մի՛ դնի:
Ask God for help, but don't put down the shovel.

Լաւ աշխատողին, լաւ ապրուստ:
To the good worker, a good living.

Հէչ բան չընելէն, հէչ բան ընելը լաւ է:
It's better to do "nothing" than not to do anything.

Մի թքելով կրակը չես հանգցնի:
You can't put out a fire by spitting on it once.

Աշխարհի տէրը աշխատանքն է:
Labor rules the world.

Գիտցի՛ր պակասութիւններդ
Know your shortcomings

Ծանի՛ր դքեզ:
Know yourself.

Քաջալ (ճաղատ) ես, գլխարկդ գլուխդ պահիր:
If you are bald, keep your hat on your head.

Ուղտին ասացին. «Շլինքդ (վիզ) խի՞ ա ծռռռ.» ասաց.
«Ի՞նչս ա դռւղ, որ շլինքս դռւղ լինի:»
They asked the camel, “Why is your neck so crooked?” He said, “What is straight about me, that I should have a straight neck?”

Եղի՛ր խոհեմ
Be prudent

Գէլին քեռի ըսէ, մինչեւ կամուրջն անցնիս:
Be friendly with the wolf, until you cross the bridge.
[Lit.: Call the wolf “uncle,” ...]

Առաջ միտք արա, յետոյ գործ սկսի:
Think first, then get down to work.

Տասը չափի, մէկ կտրի:
Measure ten times, cut once.

Մտնելուց առաջ միտք արա, թէ ինչպէս դուրս գաս:
Before going in, think of a way out.

Պզտիկէն սկսէ, որ մեծին հասնիս:
Start with the small to arrive at the big.

Օձն ուշափն (վիշապին) հետ չափուեցաւ, հազար տեղէ
կտրատեցաւ:

The serpent measured herself up with the vishap, and was
torn into a thousand pieces.*

Եղի՛ր լուրջ
Be serious

Ծանր նստի, որ լիտր դաս:
Sit weightily to carry weight.

Ծանր տեղդ մի՛ թեթեւացնի:
Don't make your solid position look light.

Ծանր քարը իր տեղումը կը մնայ:
A heavy stone remains in its place.

Եղի՛ր խոնարհ
Be humble

Խոնարհ եղիր ջրի պէս, կտրուկ եղիր թրի պէս:
Be lowly like the water, and sharp like the sword.

Ատամները թափած շունը պպղած կը հաջայ:
A toothless dog will crouch when it barks.

Ինչքան որ գիտուն ըլնես, չիմացածդ մի անգէտից
հարցրու:

*However literate you are, ask the illiterate what you don't
know.*

**Եղի՛ր զգոյշ
Be cautious**

Բերանդ բանալուդ աչքդ բաց:
Instead of opening your mouth, open your eyes.

Սատանի հետ ճամբայ գնայ, համա պոչը բաց մի՛ թողա:
Walk with the devil, but don't let go of his tail.

Շուն խաղացնողի ձեռին փէտ (փայտ) կ'ըլնի:
A dog trainer must carry a rod.

Ողջ գլուխդ Աւետարանի տակ մի՛ դներ:
Don't put your wholesome head under the Bible.
[“Putting your head under the Bible” signifies subjecting yourself to unnecessary risks.]

Ղարիպ (ամայի) գեղ (գիւղ) ման եկողը ձեռին երկար դազանակ (գաւազան) պիտի ունենայ:
He who wanders in a deserted village should carry a long stick in his hand.

Սատանի հետ թոփ (գնդակ) չեն խաղայ:
Don't play ball with the devil.

Առաջ գետին անցքը գտիր, ետքը ջուր մտիր:
Look first for a ford, then go into the water.

Կրակի հետ հանաք անել չի լինի:
Don't play games with fire.

Պառկած շանը քար չեն գցիլ:
Don't stone a sleeping dog.

Առաջ լուծ ու կամդ պատրաստիր, յետոյ գիժ մոզու (հորթ) ականջիցը բռնիր:
First prepare the yoke, and then take the violent ox by the ears.

Շան հետ ընկերացիր, փէտը ձեռիցդ մի գցի:
Befriend a dog, but don't put down the rod.

Ո՛չ սատանին կը տեսնեմ, ո՛չ երեսը կը թքնեմ:
I won't see the devil, I won't spit in his face.
[i.e., To avoid unpleasantness, I forego some pleasure.]

Զիռւ առջեւից անցիր, շան ետեւից:
Walk ahead of the horse and behind the dog.

Կծողի քամակին կանգնի, քացի տուողի՝ առաջին:
Stand behind the biter and in front of the kicker.

Երկու աչքիդ մէկին մի՛ հաւատար:
Don't trust either of your eyes.

Ամէն մարդի հաւատալ չի լինի:
You cannot believe everybody.

Հեռու կեցիր գէշ մարդոցմէ
Beware of evil people

Անզգամից փախի:
Keep away from unfeeling people.

Տափուկ մարդուց փախի:
Run away from a stealthy person.

Անզգամ կնկանից հեռու կաց:
Stay away from an insensitive woman.

Փախի էն ջրից, որ ո՛չ կը խռչայ, ո՛չ կը ֆշչայ:
Keep away from waters that neither roar nor murmur.
[i.e., Quiet people can be deceptively dangerous.]

COMMANDMENTS

Սատանի հետ պոստան մի՛ ցաներ:
Don't plant crops with the devil.

Յենուէ՛ սեփական ուժերուդ վրայ
Rely on your own strength

Ուրիշի պարանով հորը մի՛ մտնի:
Don't descend into the well with someone else's rope.

Եղունգ ունիս, գլուխդ քերէ:
If you have nails, scratch your head.

Ուրիշի ձեռքն աշողը (նախողը) անօթի կը մնայ:
He who depends on others will stay hungry.

Մէկ աչքը միւսին օգուտ չունի:
One eye is of no use to the other.

Ուրիշին հացով փորը չի կշտանար:
You cannot eat your fill with other people's bread.

Ուրիշի ձեռքով կրակ մի՛ բռներ:
Don't handle fire with someone else's hand.

էլի (օտար) ձեռքով ապուր ուտողը բերանը կը վառէ:
He who is fed soup by someone else will get his mouth burned.

Մի՛ աճապարեր
Do not hurry

Վազողին (շտապող) տղայ չի լինի:
He who hurries will never have a son.
[Having a son is considered to be a great achievement.]

Շտապեր ես, ետ մնացեր ես:
If you hurry, you will fall behind.

Կամաց գնա, որ շուտ հասնիս:
Go slowly, to arrive quickly.

Շուտ վազողը շուտ չի հասնի:
He who runs fast won't arrive first.

Հանդարտ գնացողը շուտ կ'երթա:
He who walks slowly, moves quickly.

Շատ շտապողը երկու անգամ կը նստի:
He who hurries much will rest twice.

Կամաց-կամաց, բամպակը կ'ըլլի մանած:
Slowly done, the cotton will be spun.

Ուշ լինի, նուշ լինի:
Let it be later, but better.

Ձուրը չտեսած, չեն բոպիկնար:
Don't take off your shoes before seeing the water.

Էլը չառած, ախոռ մի' չինիր:
Don't build a stall before buying the donkey.

Ձուկը ծովում պազար չեն անի:
Don't bargain for fish that are still in the sea.

Ձի չեղած նալ չեն փնտռեր:
Don't shop for horseshoes if you haven't got a horse.

Կրակ չվառած, հաց չեն թխի:
Don't start the bread before setting the fire.

Արջը չզարկած, փոստը մի՛ ծախեր:
Don't sell the fur before hunting the bear.

Ապահովէ՛ յաջողութիւնդ ի սկզբանէ
Ensure your success from the start

Ջուրն աղէն կը կտրեն:
Stop the water at the source.

Ձուկը գլխէն կը բռնեն:
Hold the fish by its head.

Օձը գլխէն կը սպանեն:
Kill the snake by chopping off its head.

Աւազին վրայ տուն չեն շիներ:
Don't build a house on sand.

Մի՛ վստահիր ամէն մարդու
Do not trust everybody

Ամէն սպիտակ մօրուքի չեն հաւատայ:
Do not put your faith in every white beard.
[The "white beard" is associated with wisdom.]

Աղուէսը հաւաքնին դարավո՞ւրչ (պահակ):
Can the fox ever guard the chicken coop?

Գառը գայլին պահ տուին:
They entrusted the lamb to the wolf.

Գայլի ետրային (վէրք) հաւատալու չէ:
Don't believe the wounds of the wolf.

Պատրաստ եղիր կրելու հետեւանքները
Be ready to accept the consequences

Ձուկ բռնողը ջրեմէն չի վախենայ:
A fisherman does not fear water.

Ձուկ բռնողի շորերը թաց կ'ըլնի:
A fisherman's clothes are always wet.

Թաց չեղած, ձուկ չի բռնուիր:
You can't catch a fish without getting wet.

Քաղցր-քաղցր ուտելուն, դառը-դառը փսխելը կայ:
What you eat sweetly, you might vomit bitterly.

Ջաղաց մտնողը կ'ալրոտուի:
He who enters the mill gets dusted with flour.

Պարը մտնողը պիտի շորորայ:
He who joins the dance must sway and prance.

Պարի ելլողը ոռը պիտի խաղցնէ:
He who gets up to dance must move his arse.

Գոմում չատ կենաս, վրայիցդ թրիքահոտ կու գայ:
If you stay in the stall for long, you will stink of dung.

Կաղնուն տակը որ քանդես, կաղին ո՞րտեղից պիտի ուտես:
If you uproot the hazelnut tree, where will you get hazelnuts
from?

Գինի խմողը կը հարբի:
He who drinks wine will get drunk.

Բաղնիք մտնողը կը քրտնի:
He who enters a steam bath will sweat.

Խակ խաղող ուտողի ակռէքը կ'առնուի:
He who eats green grapes gets a shriveled mouth.

Կրակի մօտ գնացողը կ'էրուի:
He who goes near fire gets burned.

Ճնճողուկէն վախեցողը կորեկ չի ցաներ:
He who fears sparrows will not sow millet.

Պատը փուլ եկած օրը թօղ (փռչի) կ'ըլնի:
On a day when a wall crumbles, there will be dust.

Ջանգուլակը պոչից կապողը, զնգզնգոցից չի վախենալ:
He who fastens a bell on his tail should not fear the ringing.

Վարդը քաղողի ձեռը փշով կը ծածկուի:
He who picks a rose will have his hands pricked by thorns.

Կալ մտնող աղուէսը արիւնն աչքի տակ կ'առնի:
A fox that enters a barnyard should have his death in mind.

**Համակերպէ՛ եղած պայմաններուն
 Adjust to existing conditions**

Աշխարհքը մեզի հետ չի գար, մենք անոր հետ կ'երթանք:
The world won't come with us, we must go with it.

Դուն պիտի յարմարիս կեանքին, ոչ թէ կեանքը քեզի:
It's you who must adjust to life, and not life to you.

Որ գեղն երթաս, էն տեղի գդակը դիր:
Put on the hat of the village you enter.

էն գեղում, որ սաղ քոռ են, դու էլ աչքերդ կապի:
If the whole village is blind, you should blindfold yourself as

well.

Նեղ տեղ մարդ իր մամուլ (մայր) սիրողին «ապի»
(հայրիկ) կ'ըսէ:

When need be, one will say "father" to his mother's lover.

Ժամանակը քեզ չի յարմարի, դու՛ ժամանակին յարմարի:
Times won't adjust to you; you must adjust to the times.

Համբերատար եղիր *Be patient*

Համբերէ՛, որ բերանդ համ դառ:
Be patient, and a good flavor will fill your mouth.

Համբերութիւնը կեանք է:
Patience is life.

Համբերութիւնը կեանք է, շատն ալ տանջանք է:
Patience is life but too much brings strife.

Համբերէ՛, որ պապան բան բերէ:
Be patient and wait, and father will fill your plate.
[Lit.: ..., "and father will bring you something."]

Վախտը (ժամանակ) վախտին, արժան կ'ըլնես փափուկ
թախտին:

When time's run is complete, you'll have won your soft seat.

Մաքուր եղիր *Be clean*

Էծը որ էծ ա, տեղը քերում ա, նոր ա նստում:
Even the goat scrubs his spot before sitting down.

Աղքատ ապրելը ամօթ չի, կեղտոտ ապրելն է ամօթ:
It's no shame to live in need, but it is to live in filth.

Աղքատ աղքատ, քիթդ սրբի, էլի աղքատ:
Poor, be poor; but wipe your nose, and still be poor.
[i.e., Financial status has nothing to do with cleanliness.]

Աղտոտ մարդը Ջատկին էլ աղտոտ կ'ըլնի:
The dirty will be dirty even at Easter.
[At Easter, everybody ought to be well-dressed and clean.]

Շատ կեղտոտ մնալը սապոնին (օճառ) վնաս է:
Staying dirty for too long is hard on the soap.

Պահանջէ՛, որպէսզի ստանաս
Ask, that you may receive

Մինչեւ դուռը չթակես, բաց անող չի ըլնի:
If you do not knock at the door, nobody will open it.

Զլացող երեխային ծիծ չեն տար:
If the baby doesn't cry, it doesn't get nursed.

Ոչխարն վայեց, ապրեցաւ, այծը չվայեց, սատկեցաւ:
The sheep bleated and survived; the goat didn't and it died.

Բաց բերանը անօթի չի մնար:
An open mouth won't stay hungry.

Կռկռացող հաւուն կուտ շատ կու տան:
A cackling hen gets a lot of grain.

Մինչեւ եօթ դուռ չծեծես, մէկը չի բացուիր:
You must knock at seven doors, before one opens.

Եղի՛ր հեռատես
Be farsighted

Թունաւոր օձի գլուխը քանի չուտ ջարդես - օգուտ է:
The sooner you crush the head of the poisonous snake, the better off you are.

Օձի գլուխը պզտիկուց պիտի ջարդեր:
A snake's head should be crushed when young.

Մոլոր ճամփի կիսից յետ դառնալը խէր է:
If you go astray, turn back halfway.

Ոչխար ունեցողը չուն ալ կը պահէ:
He who keeps sheep must keep a dog as well.

Էն ծէրից (ծայր) բռնի, որ էս ծէրը քեզ մնայ:
Hold onto the other end so this end stays with you.

Չափդ գիտցի՛ր
Know your limits

Ուժդ չյաղթած քարը մի՛ վերցնէր:
Don't lift a stone that exceeds your strength.

Քիչ բարձի, չուտ դարձի:
Keep your load light, return before night.

Չեռքդ չհասած տեղը մի՛ երկնցնի:
Don't reach out beyond your reach.

Գլուխդ չհաւքած տեղը, ջանդ մի՛ ներս տանի:
Where your head does not fit, don't push your body in.

Մէկ ձեռքով երկու ձմերուկ չեն բռնի:
You cannot carry two watermelons in one hand.

Մէկ քարով երկու ընկոյզ չի դարնուիր:
You cannot crack two walnuts with one stone.

Երկու նապաստակի ետեւէն վազողը մէկն ալ չի բռնէր:
He who runs after two hares will catch neither.

Ոտդ կարպետովդ մին արա:
Stretch your feet according to your blanket.

Շատ ծիծաղը լաց կը բերէ:
Too much laughter will bring tears.

Ով չի չափեր, չի բաւեցունէր:
If you don't ration out, you will run out.

Լուն ուղտ մի՛ շինէր:
Don't make a camel out of a flea.

Շատի ետեւից գնաս, քիչն էլ կը կորցնես:
If you go after a lot, you lose the little you've got.

Խնայէ՛ նեղ օրուան համար
Save for a needy day

Լա՛յն օրդ նեղ արա, որ նեղ օրդ լա՛յն ապրես:
Tighten yourself in your ample days, to live amply in your tight days.

Ինչ որ դառն դատես, էն քաղցր կ'ուտես:
What you earn with bitter sweat, you will spend with sweet delight.

Խօսքը տոկլաթը (հարստութիւն) չէ, կառավարելն է:
It's not making a fortune, but managing it, that counts.

Շատ անելով չատանալ չի, քիչ ուտելով կ'աւելնայ:
Working more does not add, spending [lit.: eating] less, does.

Տանտիկինի մի ձեռը գող պիտի ըլնի:
A good housewife should be stealing with one hand.

Ճերմակ ստակը սեւ օրուայ համար է:
White (silver) money is for black days.
[i.e., Savings are for hard times.]

Դուռը մեծ բանալը հեշտ է, պղտիկցնելը՝ դժուար:
It's easy to cut out the door wide, it's hard to narrow it down.

Եղի՛ր գործունեայ
Be active

Դուն քեզ օգնէ, Աստուած ալ քեզ կ'օգնէ:
Help yourself, and God will help you.

Դանակը որ ծալլես, ճէպդ (գրպան) դնես, կը ժանգոտի:
If you fold a knife and keep it in your pocket, it will rust.

Ման եկող գէլը անօթի չի մնայ:
A searching wolf will never starve.

Պտտող աղուէսը մեռած առիւծէն լաւ է:
A searching fox is better than a dead lion.

Աշխարհքը դմակ է, խելօքը՝ դանակ:
The world is a dmak, the smart person a knife.*

Պատուէ՛ք քեզմէ՛ մեծերը
Honor your elders

Մեծին պատուէ՛, որ մեծանաս:
Honor the elderly, to be honored yourself.

Ծերանաս, ծերի խաթրը իմանաս:
When you age, you value the aged.

Մեծի խօսքին ականջ չանողը սոված կը մեռնի:
If you don't listen to the elders, you will starve to death.

Մեծի խօսքը լսողի ոտքը քարի չի գայ:
He who listens to the elder will never stumble on a stone.

Մեծ չճանչցողը, Աստուած ալ չի ճանչնար:
He who does not respect the aged, does not respect God either.

Մեծին խօսքը չեն կտրի:
When elders speak, do not interrupt.

Խօսքը մեծին չեն յետ դարձնի:
Never talk back to the elders.

Պզտիկին լեզուն կարճ կ'ըլլայ:
The youth must hold his tongue.

Ունեցածիդ տէրը եղի՛ր
Guard your belongings

Անտէր գառը, գայլն է կերեր:
A lamb without a shepherd becomes the wolf's prey.

Անտէր ժամին (եկեղեցի) սատանէքը տէր կ'ըլնին:
In an abandoned church, devils take over.

Դուռդ փակ պահի, որ հարեւանիդ գող չհանես:
Keep your door locked so you don't accuse your neighbor of theft.

Իրեն մալին (ապրանք) աղէկ չնայողը, գողուն ընկեր է:
He who does not watch his belongings is the thief's accomplice.

Անտէր մալին (ապրանք) տէր շատ կայ:
Unclaimed goods will be claimed by many.

Բաց ամանը շունն ալ կը լիզէ, կատուն ալ:
An open pot will be licked by cat and dog.

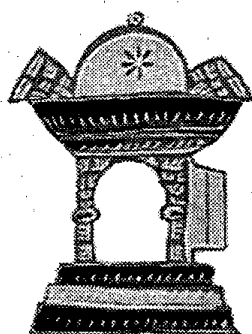
Եղի՛ր առատաճէռն *Be generous*

Տու՛ր, մի՛ վախենա. ա՛ռ, մի՛ ամաչիր:
Give, don't be afraid; take, don't be ashamed!

Երանի՛ տուողաց, ո՛չ առնողաց:
It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Ողորմութիւնն էնպէս տուր, որ չապիկդ չիմանայ:
Give charity without even your shirt knowing it.
 [i.e., Alms should be given in secret.]

III
Ընտանիք և Ազգականներ
Family and Relatives



THEMES

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Մարդ և կին, ամուսնացած և այրի
Man and wife, married and widowed

Մարդ ու կնկայ դործը երկնքումն է շինուում:
Man and wife are matched in heaven.

Մարդի շուաք (շուք), վարդի շուաք:
The shadow of a husband, the shadow of a rose.
 ["Shadow" is a metaphor for "protection."]

Մի փէտէ (փայտէ) մարդը լաւ ա, քանց օխտը պողպատէ տղէն:
A husband made of wood is better than seven sons made of steel.

Տան համար տղամարդու կեղտն էլ հարկաւոր ա:
For a house, even a man's dirt is needed.

Մէկը թէ զանդակ է, մէկէլը բամպակ պիտի ըլնի:
If the one is (as loud as) a bell, the other should be (as quiet as) cotton.

[i.e., Opposite yet complementary personalities are necessary for a successful marriage.]

Աղբէրը օրական, մարդը յաւիտենական:
A brother is for a day, a husband is forever.

Կնիկդ որ լաւ ըլնի, մի՛ երթա հարսանիք, տանդ ամէն օր հարսանիք է ու հարսանիք. թէ կնիկդ վատ ըլնի, մի՛ երթա մեռելատուն, տունդ ամէն օր մեռելատուն է ու մեռելատուն:

If you have a good wife, do not go to weddings; you have one every day in your house. If you have a bad wife, do not go to funerals; you have one every day in your house.

Շէն կենայ մեր տնիկ, անուշ կենայ մեր կնիկ:
May our home be in good cheer, may my wife be sweet all year.

Տունը թող կնիկ լինի, թող գէշ (տգեղ) լինի:

A home should have a housewife, no matter how homely.

Մարդը որ կայ, գետ է, կնիկը անոր դէմ բանդ է:

The man is a river, the wife is a dam against it.

[i.e., The husband's earnings have to be guarded by the wife.]

Մարդը սել (հեղեղ) է, կնիկը գէօլ (լիճ) է:

The man is a flood, the woman a lake.

Ամէն կնիկ կնիկ եղնի, պատերն ամէն պլիկ (մետաղէ դրամ) կ'եղնի:

If all women were (real) women, the walls of all houses would be made of coins.

Մարդը տան մշակն է:

The husband is the slave of the house.

Մարդը տան մշակ, կնիկը տան ճախարակ:

The husband is the slave of the house, the wife the spinning wheel.

Էրիկ-կնիկ են, իրարու բերան թքնեն, կը կշտանան:

They are just man and wife; if they spit in each other's mouths, they will have enough.

[i.e., As opposed to big families, a couple has few expenses.]

Մարդը դուրս, վաստակը ներս:

The husband (should be) outside, his earnings inside.

Աստուած մահ տայ, բաժան-բաժնու թիւն չտայ:

Better God give us death than divorce.

Կնիկը էրկանը կէսն է:

A wife is her husband's half.

Քաջութիւնը տղամարդու դարդն ա:

Bravery decorates a man.

Կնիկմարդը որ կայ, մարդու կեանքն ա:
A wife is her husband's life.

Կնիկը տղամարդի հոգին ա:
A wife is her husband's soul.

Անզաւակ կինը բարեկամ չէ էրկանը:
A childless wife is not her husband's ally.

Կնիկդ ծեծելու տեղ ֆէսդ ծեծէ, դիր գլուխդ:
Instead of beating your wife, beat your fez and put it on.*

Ով չի ծեծել իր կնկանը, նա վայ կը տայ իր ծնկանը:
He who didn't strike his wife, will strike his knees.
[Striking one's knees is a gesture of regret.]

Մարդի ծեծած՝ վարդի ծեծած:
Beaten by the husband, beaten with a rose.
[Down-playing the impact of a husband's beating]

Մաքրասէր կնիկմարդը էրկան վրայէն կ'իմացուի:
It shows on her husband if a wife is clean.

Ելնողին տեղը կ'առնին, մեռնողի՝ կնիկը:
If you rise, they take your place; if you die, they take your wife.

Կնիկն որ մարդուն խաբէլ ուղենայ, ասեղը տալտա
(հոփանի) կ'ընէ:
A wife wanting to cheat on her husband will use a needle for a shield.

[i.e., When it comes to outwitting their husbands, women are ingenious.]

Էրիկ-կնկայ կռիւը մինչեւ անկողին է:
A couple's fighting lasts until bedtime.

Մէկ կարգուողն է զղջացել, մէկ չկարգուողը:
Sorry is the one who marries, and sorry the one who doesn't.

էրիկ-կնիկ կռուեցան, տխմար գիտցաւ բաժնուեցան:

A couple had a strong discourse, the fool thought they would divorce.

Կնիկդ որ գեղէն, դուն էլ էն տեղէն:

From the village that your wife comes, you should come too.

[i.e., You should marry someone from your own village.]

Սիրուն կնկայ ծոցը պառկի, գէշ (տգեղ) կնկայ ձեռի հացը
կեր:

Sleep with the beautiful, but eat from the plain woman's hand.

Ազապ (ամուրի) տղի աչքին փարտա (վարագոյր) կայ:

A young bachelor's eyes are dim.

Որբեւայրու փէշն էլ իրան ահ ա:

For a widow, even her skirt is a threat.

[A widow is always under scrutiny for her morality.]

Տղայ չհաւանող աղջիկը առանց մարդի կը մնայ:

A choosy maiden will remain unmarried.

Տղադ մեռաւ, տղիդ վրայ լացիր. մարդդ մեռաւ, քեզ
վրայ լացիր:

If your child dies, cry for your child; if your husband dies, cry for yourself.

Մէկ տարուայ ստերճ կովը չեն մորթի:

They don't slaughter a cow that hasn't calved for a year.

[i.e., Don't divorce your wife if she didn't give birth after the first year of marriage.]

Մէկ տարուայ անպտուղութիւնով ծառը չեն կտրի:

You don't chop down a tree that has been fruitless one year.

Յետին կնիկը կարկատան է:

A second wife is patchwork.

Առաջին կնիկը տունինն է, երկրորդ կնիկն էրիկինն է:
The first wife is for the house, the second wife for her spouse.

Ծնողք ու զաւակ
Parents and children

Հէրը հարեւան, մէրը բարեկամ:⁵⁰
A father is a neighbor; a mother, a friend.

Աշխարհքում ամէն բան կը ճարուի, բացի հայրն ու մայրը:
In this world one can find anything, except a father and a mother.

Բերողը կը յաղթէ գրողին:
A mother [lit.: the bearer] will subdue the grogh.*
[Stressing the supremacy of the mother, the symbol of procreation, over the grogh*, i.e., death.]

Հօրն ու մօր մեղքը տղային կը հարցնեն:
They hold the child responsible for his parents' faults.

Ուտէ որդին, վճարէ հոգին:
The son will enjoy, the (father's) soul will pay.

Հայր ունեմ, հօր տուն ունեմ, մայր ունեմ, իրաւ ունեմ,
եղբայր ունեմ, բան չունեմ:

Having a father, I have a paternal home; having a mother, I truly have something; having a brother, I have nothing.

Տու՛ր ծնողքին, որ տայ զաւակին: մի՛ տար զաւակին, չի տար ծնողքին:

Give to the parents, so the child gets something; don't give to the child, the parents get nothing.

Հարն ու մարը զաւակին համար, զաւակը ինքնիրեն համար:
The parents are for the child, the child is for himself.

Անորդին մի տարտ ունի, որդատէրը՝ հազար:
*He who has no children has one worry, he who has children,
 a thousand.*

Որդի չեն ասել, որդ են ասել:
It's not a child, it's a mite.

Տղէն որ կայ, անուշ որդունք (որդ) է:
A child is a sweet mite.

Որդի չունես, հոգի չունես:
If you have no child, you have no heart [lit.: ... "no soul"].

Եօթ լաճու տէր, փողոց է մնացել անտէր:
You bring up seven kids, end up abandoned on the streets.

Մարդու աչքը հանողը իր միսն-արիւնը կը լինի:
The one who plucks out your eye is your own flesh and blood.
 [Said about bad children.]

Գողը որ տնից լինի, եզը երդիկից կը հանեն:
*If a thief lives in your home, your ox will be lifted through
 your skylight.*

[Said about a hidden enemy in your own home, and particularly about one's own children.]

Տղէն որ կայ, հօր օջախի սիւնն է:
A son is the pillar of his father's odjakh.*

Վատ տղան ցախ կը ժողուէ, ուրիշին օջախ կը վառէ:
A bad son collects wood to fuel somebody else's odjakh.*

Կովը հորթին ինչքան ատէ, ամէն չարէ կ'ազատէ:
*No matter how much she hates the calf, the cow will save it
 from any harm.*

Հալալ զաւակը կը շինի, հարամ զաւակը կը քանդի:
A good child builds, a bad child destroys.

Ընկել ա փողատէրը, կանգնել ա տղատէրը:

The one with money descended; the one with children ascended.

Ատամից անուշ բան չկայ, բայց որ ցաւաց, կը քաշեն՝ կը գցեն:

There is nothing dearer than a tooth, but when it hurts you pull it out and throw it away.

[Said about bad children whom people renounce.]

Մարագը հորթը կը հատացնի, սնտուկը՝ երէխէն:

The calf empties the barn; the child, the trunk [i.e. the savings].

Անառակ որդին տունը լաց կը բերէ:

A prodigal son brings tears into the house.

Երկուսը մէկի տեղ, մէկը հէջի տեղ:

Two (children) count for one, one counts for none.

Ով որդի չի բերել, գտնովի գիտէ:

He who has never had children, thinks they can be picked.

Տղադ մեծցաւ, մեծ ցաւ:

Your child grew, your pain grew too.

Տղին լաւը հօրէն-մօրէն կ'ըլնի:

The goodness of a child comes from his father and mother.

Լաւ մարդու որդին փուչ չի դուրս գայ:

A good man's child cannot be rotten.

Էծը ուր երթայ, ուլը հետը կ'երթայ:

Wherever the goat goes, the kid follows.

Ճուտամէր կատուն գող կը լինի:

A mother cat will steal.

[i.e., A mother will go to great lengths for her children.]

Ջիգրի (հարազատ) մրմուռ (ցաւ) չտեսնողը չի
ջինաւորուել (դիւահարուել):

*He who hasn't experienced a child's death, has never been
stricken by a dev*.*

Ջաւակաց կսկիծը կրակէ չապիկ է:
Grief for the loss of a child is a burning shirt.

Ագռաւին հարցրին. «Ղչերի (թռչուն) միջին ո՞րն ա
սիրուն» Ասաց. «Իմ ճուտս»:

*They asked the raven, "Who is prettiest among birds?" The
raven said, "My young."*

Մայրը տէս, աղջիկն ա՛ռ:
See the mother, seize the daughter.

Որդին մօրը չալակով Երուսաղէմ չի տանի:
No son will carry his mother to Jerusalem on his back.⁵¹

Որդին ափումը ձուածեղ էլ անի, մօր ամակի (երախտիք)
տակից չի կարող դուրս գալ:
*Even if he fries her an omelette on his palm, a son cannot pay
back his mother.*

Ճուտը մօր թեւերի տակին կը մեծանայ:
A chick grows under his mother's wings.

Տղուն լեզուն մայրը կը հասկանայ:
Only a mother understands her child's language.

Մալին տէր, որդուն հէր (հայր):
Goods need an owner, and a son a father.

Տղէն որ լաւ լինի, իրա հօր տունը կը շինի:
A good son will build his father's house.

Հօր անունը աղջկան կը ծախի:
The father's name sells the daughter.

Մօրը բախտ, աղջկան թախտ:

A mother's destiny will be a daughter's settee.

[i.e.: A daughter will get her mother's fate.]

*Սիրունին չեն տայ մտիկ, օրոցքին կը տան մտիկ:*⁵²

They don't look at the beauty, they look at the cradle.

Տղէն տղայ պիտի լինի, որ մատից փուչ հանի:

A child should be a boy, to pull thorns from your finger.

Վատ հօր պատիժը փուչ տղէն ա:

A bad father's penalty is an empty son.

Տղէն հօրը կը քաշի:

A son takes after his father.

Որդին հօրը կ'ելլէ, աղջիկը՝ մօրը:

A son takes after his father, a daughter after her mother.

Հօր ձէնն Աստուած շուտ կը լսի:

God listens fast to a father's voice.

Մարդը մարդով, որդին հօրով:

People need each other, and a son his father.

Հայրն ինչ, որդին նման զնման:

Like father, like son.

Տղէն տղից կ'ըլնի:

It's the man who makes the boy.

[It's the man's doing when women give birth to boys.]

Կին

Women and wives

Առիւծը առիւծ է, էգ լինի թէ որձ:

A lion is a lion, whether male or female.

Կինն որ մանչ ծնի, տան պատերն ալ կը խնդան:

When a wife gives birth to a boy, even the walls of the house rejoice.

Կնկան ֆէլ (խարդաւանք) բարձեր են սէլ, սէլը չէ տարեր կնկան ֆէլ:

They loaded a cart with woman's schemes, the cart couldn't hold them.

Կնկայ դումաշ հալաւը հրկան օջախը կը մարէ:

The wife's costly clothing effaces the husband's odjakh.*

Կնկան շինածը, Աստուած չի շիներ:

Even God cannot build what a wife can build.

Կնկայ շինած տունը Աստուած չի քանդի, Աստուծ շինածը՝ կնիկը կը քանդի:

A home built by a woman not even God can destroy; a home built by God a woman can destroy.

Աղէկ կին, չունի գին:

A good wife has no price.

Կնկայ մազը երկար է, խելքը՝ կարճ:

A woman's hair is long, her brain is short.

Ո՛չ կնկան էսթիպար (վստահութիւն) կայ, ո՛չ ձիուն:

Trust neither women nor horses.

Կնկան արտաստունքը աչքի ծէրն (ծայրն) է:

A woman's tears are on the rim of her eyes.

Որ տունը որ գնաս, կնկան բարեկամ եղիր:

Wherever you go (as a guest), befriend the wife.

Կնիկմարդ կայ, տուն կը շինէ, կնիկմարդ կայ, տուն կը քանդէ:

Some women build houses, others destroy them.

Ի՞նչ անեմ գեղեցիկը, աշխարհաշրջիկը. կ'ուզեմ տգեղը,
տնաշէնը:

*What's the use of a pretty wife who is all over the world? I
prefer a homely homemaker.*

Տունը ներսէն կը շինուի:
A house is built from inside.

Կանայք իմանան թէ երկինքը սէյիւր (դիտելու բան) կայ,
սանդուխ կը դնեն թէ հոն ի՞նչ կայ:

*If women hear there is a show in the sky, they get on a ladder
to look up high.*

Գէշ կնիկմարդէն դուերը փախել են:
Even the devs fled the evil woman.*

Վատ կնարմատից քաջքերն են փախել:
Even the kachks fled the hag.*

Կինը կատու ա, ով որ շոյեց, նրան էլ կը կպչի:
A woman is (like) a cat; you caress her, she sticks to you.

Հասած աղջիկը որ բախտ ունենար, թախտ աւելելուց ճուճ
կը գտնէր:

*If an old maid were lucky enough, she would find a prick
while sweeping the floor.*

Ամաչող կնկանը ո՛չ տղայ կ'ըլնի, ո՛չ աղջիկ:
A bashful wife will give birth to neither boy, nor girl.

Խելացի կինը էրկանը իր ոռի կէսը ցոյց կու տայ:
A smart wife shows her husband only half of her arse.

[A wife should not disclose herself entirely; she should always
keep some secrets.]

Դուստրեր և աղջիկներ
Daughters and girls

Աղջիկն ուրիշի տան ճրագն է:
A daughter is a candle in somebody else's house.

Աղջիկը էլու (օտար) պատ ա:
A daughter is the wall of somebody else's house.

Աղջիկը ուրիշի որդի է, տղէն միշտ քունն է:
A daughter is somebody else's child, a son is yours for good.

Աղջիկը ռակի օրօրոցով հօր տունը չի նստի:
A girl won't stay at her father's house even in a golden cradle.

Տղին ջուխտ ձեռով են պահել, աղջկան՝ մէկ:
They hold a boy with both hands, a girl with one.

Աղջիկը որ կայ, անկտրիլ ձմերուկ ա:
A girl is an uncut melon.

Ժամ քանդելը լաւ է, քանց աղջկայ անուն կոտրելը:
It's better to destroy a church, than to defame a girl.

Մանչ բերող աղջկան դրսեցիի չեն տար:
A girl who bears boys should not be given away to an outsider.

Պառաւած աղջիկը չատ անբախտ կ'ըլնի:
An unmarried girl is an unhappy girl.

Լաւ աղջիկը օխտը (եօթը) տղայ արժէ:
A good daughter is worth more than seven sons.

Աղջկան որ ձգես իր կամքին, կ'երթայ կամ տաւուլճին կ'առնէ, կամ դուռնաճին:

If you let the girl choose, she will go and marry either the drummer or the zurna-player.*

Աղջիկն որ կայ, տան ծաղիկն ա:
A girl is the flower of a home.

Որ պսակուել ուզենայ, աղջիկը տան կճուճներն է
ջարդում, տղան՝ օտարութիւն է գնում:

When they are eager to marry, girls break jars, boys go
abroad.

Զգոված աղջիկը տունն է մնացեր:
If you don't praise a maiden, she becomes an old maid.

Շատ լաւ աղջիկ է: Ինչէ՞ն յայտնի է: Մայրը վկայեց:
She is a very good girl. How do you know? Her mother said so.

Մօրը գովածը թո՛ղ ու փախի, դրկիցին (դրացի) գովածը
ա՛ռ ու փախի:

What the mother praised, leave and run; what the neighbor
praised, take and run.

Աղջիկն որ հարս կ'երթայ, գուլպի պէս է. կը քանդեն,
նորէն կը գործեն:

When a girl gets married, she is treated like a knitted sock:
they rip her up and knit her all over again.

Աղջիկը միսաֆիր է, ժամանակն եկաւ՝ կ'երթայ:
A daughter is a guest; when the time comes, she leaves.

Աղջիկը դռան ետեւն ա:
A daughter is behind the door.

[A girl lives only temporarily at her parents' house.]

Աղջիկ չեղած, հարս եղաւ:
Before becoming a girl, she became a bride.
[Refers to girls marrying at a very early age.]

Ո՛չ առ ու փախի, ո՛չ թող ու փախի:
Neither take her and run, nor leave her and run.
[About girls who are not particularly beautiful.]

Ձոր փայտը չատ ջուր կը ծծէ:

Dry wood absorbs a lot of water.

[Buxom figure was a beauty requirement; hence the message: skinny girls can gain weight after marriage.]

Աղջկայ լաւ մազն էլ մի աղջիկ արժէ:

The beautiful hair of a girl is worth another girl.

Մազն ու միսը կու գան ու կ'երթան:

Hair and flesh come and go.

Ծամովին ծամերը թափաւ, անծամին ծամ եկաւ:

The one who had hair, lost it; the one who didn't, got it.

Գինին կ'ընտրեն համով, աղջիկը՝ նամով (պատիւ):

Wine you choose by taste, a girl if she is chaste.

Աղջիկը որ կայ, չուշա (ապակի) է, որ կոտորուեց, չի կարկատուի:

A girl is like crystal; if it shatters, it cannot be restored.

[Message: A girl's virginity is sacrosanct.]

Սպիտակի տեսքը, սեւի համը:

The looks of the white, the taste of the black.

Աղջկայ մէկ սպիտակութիւնը օխտը ամօթ կը պարտկէ:

The whiteness of a girl's skin covers up seven sins.

[Stereotype: White skin is beautiful.]

Ձիւնն ալ ճերմակ է, ամա շուները վրան կը քաքնեն:

The snow is white, too, but dogs shit on it.

Ինտոր աղջիկ, անանկ հարս:

Such a maid, such a bride.

Աղջիկ դառար, լաւ դառար, հարս դառար, ցաւ դառար:

You are a girl, you are a gain; you are a bride, you are a

pain.

Աղքատը չունեցող աղջիկը տուն է մնացեր:

A girl who has no brother stays at home.

[i.e., A girl who has a brother has more chances to get married.]

Մի՛ տար շէն տան, տու՛ր աղէկ մանկան:

Don't give her away to a great house, but to a great spouse.

Ձին ճանչցիր քայլուածքէն, իսկ աղջիկը՝ նայուածքէն:

A horse you know from its gait, and a girl from her gaze.

Աղջիկն որ կայ, կամուրջ է. ով ըսես վրայէն կ'անցնի:

A girl is like a bridge; anybody can walk over her.

Երեխայ

Children

Երեխին բանի դիր, հետը գնա:

Put a child to work, but go with him.

Գեղ կը մտնես, խապարն երեխից առ:

When you enter a village, learn the news from a child.

Տղուն կերածը հալալ է, հագածը հարամ:

What a child eats is well-spent, what he wears is wasted.

Տղին երես տալու ըլլաս, աստառն ալ հետը կ'ուզէ:

If you give a child the fabric, he will ask for the lining as well.

[i.e., A spoiled child will demand ever more.]

Երեխին ասին, ինչի՞ էս լալիս, ասաւ. «Պօսքս անց է կենում, քնդու համար:»

They asked a child, "Why do you wail?" He replied, "Because that's how my words prevail."

[Message: Parents should not overindulge their children.]

Պուճուրը լալէն կը մեծնայ:
A baby grows by crying.

Ո՛չ սրբին մոմ խոստացի, ո՛չ երեխուն բլիթ:
Don't promise a candle to a saint, nor a candy to a child.

Տղին ինչպէս բռնես, այնպէս ալ կը մեծնայ:
A child grows up the way you bring him up.

Տղին ճեպը միտք չի մնայ:
Fruit doesn't last long in a child's pocket.

Առանց երեխի տունը դատարկ բուն ա:
A home without children is an empty nest.

Տղին դալիպն (կաղապար) օրոցքն ա:
A child's mould is its cradle.

Քոյր և եղբայր Sisters and brothers

Տղէն ձեռ կ'ընկնի, աղբէրը ձեռ չի ընկնի:
You can acquire a son, but not a brother.

Աղբէրը աղբօր միս կ'ուտի, ոսկորները դէն չի գցի:
A brother would eat his brother's flesh, but would not throw away his bones.

Երկու աղբօր գլուխ մի գերեզման չի մտնի:
The heads of two brothers wouldn't fit into one grave.

Աղբէրը աղբօր վատը կ'ուզի, մահը՝ ոչ:
Brothers wish each other the worst - but not death.

Քուրը կ'ըսէ. աղբէրորդի, իմ որդի:
The sister says, "My brother's son is my son."

Քոյրն ասեց, աղբէր ունեմ, աղբէրն ասեց, քոյր չունեմ:

The sister said, "I have a brother." The brother said, "I have no sister."

Քոյրը մեռնի աղբօր համար, աղբէրը մեռնի ուրիշի համար:

Sisters would die for their brothers; brothers would die for others.

Քոյրը դնաց քուորանց, հենց իմացաւ դնաց հօրանց:

The sister visited her sister's home, she felt as if she were in her father's home.

Երիտասարդութիւն

Youth

Ճահելութիւնը մաշի (վաղէ), պառաւութիւնը քաշի:

In youth the pleasure, in old age the suffering.

Մանկուց դատումը, ծիրուց գաւազան է:

The savings in youth are a foothold in old age.

Ճահելի չուանին ցախ դնել չի լինի:

You cannot trust the rope of a youth to hold your firewood.

Ճահելի ջուրը դէպի վեր է:

Youth's water travels upstream.

[i.e., Youth is impetuous.]

Ճահելի աչքի վրին փարտա (վարագոյր) կայ:

Blinds hang in front of the youth's eyes.

Ճահելի խելք, անջուր ջաղացք:

The youth's mind is a waterless mill.

Ճահեղի քամին բարձր ա:
Youth's wind blows high.

Մարդ չուն լինի, տան պուճուրը չլինի:
Better to be a dog than the youngest in the family.

Ընտանիք և օջախ
Family and hearth

Մեծ տուն, մեծ ցաւի բուն:
A big home, a big nest of pain.

Գեղ գեղի վրայ կ'ըլնի, տուն տան վրայ չի ըլնի:
You can build a village over another, but not a home over another.

[i.e., Two families cannot live in the same house.]

Իմ տանս ծառան եմ, ուրիշին աղան եմ:
For my home, I am a servant; for others, I am a Sir.

Մարդը իր տանը հէ՛մ աղան է, հէ՛մ ծառան:
In his own home, one is both sir and servant.

Տուն քանդելն ու ժամ (եկեղեցի) քանդելը մէկ ա:
Destroying a home and destroying a church is just the same.

Ծերութիւն
Old age, the elderly

Ծերութիւն - գերութիւն:
Senility is captivity.

Էջն որ ալեւորնայ, մրջիւններն ալ վրան կը հեծնեն:
When the donkey gets old, the ants swarm him.

Ծերի արածը դառած ա, կերածը՝ կորած:

What an old person has done is won, what he has eaten is wasted.

Քանի փոքր էի, մեծից էի վախենում. մեծացայ, փոքրից եմ վախենում:

While I was young, I feared the old; now I am old, I fear the young.

Գէլը որ պառաւնայ, շներին մասխարա (ծաղրի առարկայ) կը դառնայ:

When the wolf gets old, he is mocked by the dogs.

Ալեւոր (ծեր) մարդը հազար ախպով (ամօթ) կը լցուի:
Old people are filled with a thousand shames.

Ծերն ու տղան մէկ են:

Old people and children are the same.

Ծերացանք, ծէրը (ծայրը) տեսանք:

We reached old age, we saw the edge.

Տան մեծ եղածէդ, դռան շուն եղիր:

Better to be a dog at the door than an elder in the house.

Պառաւը տան սիւնն է:

The elder is the pillar of the house.

Տունը սիւնը կը պահէ:

It's the pillar that holds up the house.

Ինչ տուն որ մեծ չլինի, մեծ քար մը տեղը կը դնեն:

If there is no elder in the house, they set up a stone instead.

Զուրը պղտիկին, խօսքը մեծին:

The young gets the water, the elder the word.

[i.e., Older people have priority in speaking, younger people in drinking water. Said when water is offered.]

Տան մեծի մի աչքը քոռ պիտի եղնի, մի ականջն էլ խուլ:
The elder of the house should be blind in one eye and deaf in one ear.

Աղէկ է ծերը տանը, թէ որ քիչ մը խելք չունենայ:
It's good to have elders at home, if they're not too smart.

Ահէլի (ծեր) աչքով աղջիկ առ, ջահէլի աչքով՝ ձի:
Choose a girl with eyes of the aged and a horse with eyes of the young.

Հարազատ և խորթ ծնողք, որք
Parents, step-parents, orphans

Եղունգը մսիցը պոկել չի լինի:
It's hard to remove a nail from flesh.

Ո՞ր մատդ կտրես, որ արիւն չգայ:
What finger does not bleed when cut?
[i.e., All children are equally dear.]

Ասլանին (առիւծ) էգ, որձ չկայ, ջիգրին՝ (հարազատ) լաճ (տղայ) ու աղջիկ:

There is no male and female among lions, and no boys and girls among loved-ones.

[i.e., Do not discriminate between girls and boys in a family.]

Արիւնը ջուր չի դառնայ:
Blood does not turn into water.

Տղին մայրը որ խորթ լինի, հայրն էլ խորթ կը լինի:
If a child's mother is a stepmother, the father becomes a stepfather.

Խորթը կը հանի մարդու մորթը:
It's the step-kin who will flay your skin.

FAMILY AND RELATIVES

Խորթ մօրն եփած կերակուրը անհամ ա:
A stepmother's cooking is tasteless.

Որբին հաց տուող չկայ, խրատ տուող չա՛տ:
To an orphan no one will give bread, but many will give advice.

Որբի պահողն Աստուած է:
It is God who keeps the orphan.

Հօրմէ որբը որբ չէ, մօրմէ որբն է որբ:
Losing your father doesn't make you an orphan, losing your mother, does.

Որբը ե՞րբ է խնդացեր:
When has an orphan ever laughed?

Որբի երեսը պինդ կ'ըլնի:
An orphan must have a thick skin.

Որբ տղան իր պորտը ինքը կը կտրէ:
An orphan cuts his own navel.

Ազգականներ *Relatives*

Հաւը թեւով կը թռչի, մարդ՝ ազգականով:
Birds fly with their wings, people with their kin.

Կեսրոջ մէկ ականջը խուլ, մէկ աչքը քոռ պիտի լինի:
A mother-in-law should be deaf in one ear and blind in one eye.

Մարդը սրտովը չեղաւ, տեգօրը չեն ճանանչի:
When you are not fond of your husband, you do not acknowledge his brother.

Հօր քրոջ մէջ կու գայ հօր հոտիկ, մօր քրոջ մէջ կու գայ
մօր հոտիկ:

*From the father's sister comes the scent of the father; from the
mother's sister the scent of the mother.*

Տեղօր պահած հարսը մեռնի, աղբօր պահած քոյրը:

Damned is a bride kept by her dakr, damned is a sister kept
by her brother.*

Երկու ներ մէկ տունի մէջ, ամէն օր կազ ու կռիւ:

With two ners in one house, everyday there is a wrangle.*

Ները որ տուն մտնի, ներոջը գետին կը դնի:

When a (new) ner comes into the home, she puts down the
(former) ner.*

Ինչ չես ուզի քրոջդ, կը կամենաս տալոջդ:

What you don't wish for your sister, you will wish for your tal.*

Աղջիկը հօր քուրին, տղէն քեռուն կը քաշի:

*A girl takes after her paternal aunt, a boy after his maternal
uncle.*

Օխտը (էօթը) քենակալ մի ճամփով գնում էին, ասացին.
«Մի մարդ էլ չկայ, որ հետը խօսենք:»

Seven kenakals were walking on the road. "A pity there is
nobody to talk to," they said.*

Քենակալը որ լաւ բան լինէր, Աստուածն էլ քենակալ
կ'ունենար:

If a kenakal were any good, God would have one, too.*

Վարդը կը կտրեն, թուփը կը վառեն:

They cut the rose and burn the bush.

[After taking a bride, the groom's parents discard her family.]

Խնամի ուչ եկէ, անուշ եկէ:

In-laws who come rarely, come dearly.

Խնամու սուտը, սէլ (սայլ) մը չի քաշեր:

The lies of the in-laws, not even a wheelbarrow could bear.

Խնամու նազը տանիլ չի ըլի:

The airs and graces of the in-laws are unbearable.

Քեռուն մայր եկեանին (քրոջորդի) ա:

The maternal uncle's wealth belongs to his nephew.

Ձոքանչի եփած ձուածեղը համով կ'ըլնի:

The mother-in-law's (the wife's mother) omelette is always tasty.

Աղքօր տղին իշխանութիւն տուին, առաջ իր մամիթին (հօրաքոյր) իշի վրայ նստեցուց:

They put the nephew (the brother's son) in charge; he seated his paternal aunt on the donkey first.

[Indicating the privileged position of the paternal relatives.]

Հարս Daughters-in-law

Ամէն մարդ քուն, կենճ (երիտասարդ) հարսը զարթուն:

Everybody is sleeping, the young daughter-in-law is sweeping.
[Lit. ... "is awake."]

Հարսը կեսրոջ դուլն (ստրուկ) է:

The daughter-in-law is her mother-in-law's slave.

Հարս դառայ, դուլ (ստրուկ) դառայ, թազի-թուլի չուլ դառայ:

Since becoming a bride, I became a drudge; I became a rag for the dogs.

Աղջկայ գէշը չտեսանք, հարսի՛ լաւը:

We have yet to see a bad daughter and a good daughter-in-law.

[i.e., An unmarried girl is always praised, whereas a daughter-in-law is always criticized.]

Քօղն երեսին, երնէ՛կ փեսին:

The veil is on her face, how lucky is the groom!

[Message 1. When the girl is shy, the bridegroom is envied.]

Message 2. Reference to the old custom of marrying a girl without seeing her before the wedding; sarcastic suggestion that the surprise could be unpleasant when the veil is lifted. Mostly used metaphorically when one is unpleasantly surprised.]

Քչակեր հարսը չեղած տարին կ'երեւայ:

It is in lean years that a bride shows if she is frugal.

[Stereotype: A girl should be temperate in her eating.]

Տանը ուղտ կ'ուտին, հարսին ու աղջկան չի հասնի:

They eat a camel in the house, the daughter-in-law and the daughter don't get any of it.

[“Camel” is used hyperbolically for a great amount of food.]

Գէշ օրն ինձի, գէշ հարսը քեզի:

The bad luck for me, the bad daughter-in-law for you.

Մլաշ (նուրբ) բուրդը հարսը գգէ, աղջիկը մանէ. սարտ (կոշտ) բուրդը՝ աղջիկը գգէ, հարսը մանէ:

The soft wool is for the daughter-in-law to tease, the daughter to spin; the tough wool is for the daughter to tease, the daughter-in-law to spin.

[Indicating the discrimination against the unmarried daughter in a patriarchal family.]

Հօրանց տունը դաշտ ու մէջտան, մարդանց տունը խորը զնդան:

The parent's house is an open meadow, the husband's house a dark jail.

Հարսին հերանց տունն ասա, ոտը բոպիկ էլ կ'երթայ:
Just mention to the bride her parental home and she'll run there barefoot.

Կեսուրս մեռաւ, տեղս լայնացաւ:
My mother-in-law died, my space became wide.

Մէյ մը նոր տունին, մէյ մ'ալ նոր հարսին, ամէն օր մէկ բան կը պակսի:
A new home and a new bride, every day they must be supplied.

Հարսի փէշն իր տուշմանն (թշնամի) ա:
A new bride's skirt is her enemy.
 [i.e., A new bride is under constant scrutiny.]

Հարս ու կեսուր կռուեցին, մարդը մնաց քարի արանքին:
The mother- and daughter-in-law had a squabble; the husband was caught in the middle.

Մի հարսնանի տունը չէն, երկուսն եղաւ՝ կիսաչէն, երեքը-չորսը, փախի՛ մէչէն (անտառը):
A home with one daughter-in-law is bright, with two it's still all right, but three or four, it's a dogfight!

Գիժ աղջիկը խելօք հարս կը լինի, գիժ հարսը՝ խելօք կին:
A crazy daughter turns into a smart bride; a crazy bride into a smart wife.

Սկեսուրը գողութիւն ըրաւ, հարսի քիթը կտրեցին:
The mother-in-law did the stealing; they cut the daughter-in-law's nose.

[The daughters-in-law are punished for the sins of their mothers-in-law.]

Սկեսրոջ ուժը հարսին կը պատի:
The power of a mother-in-law carries most weight with her daughter-in-law.

Կեսրար չունեմ, որ ախեմ, կեսուր չունեմ, որ վախեմ,
 ոտքերս թոնիր կը կախեմ:

*I have no father-in-law to revere, no mother-in-law to fear, I
 dangle my feet in the toneer*.*

[Indicating the sense of freedom a daughter-in-law enjoys
 when there are no in-laws in the house.]

Հէրանց տունը սառն աղբիւր է, թանգ-թանգ կու գան,
 խմեն՝ գնան:

*The parents' house is a cold water spring; they [i.e.
 daughters] come rarely, to drink and to leave.*

[i.e., Married daughters should make their visits short and
 infrequent.]

Հարսը գեղիցդ, սերմը՝ հողիցդ:

*The bride (should be) from your village, the seeds from your
 soil.*

Հարսը հաց թխեց, տանտիկինը պարծեցաւ:

*The bride baked the bread, the housewife [i.e., the
 mother-in-law] boasted.*

Հարսի սուգը սեղանն է:

For a daughter-in-law setting the table is a grief.

[Lit.: The daughter-in-law's mourning is the table.]

Ղառղառն (ագռաւ) եկաւ երեխիս աչքը հանեց, ես հարս
 էի, ձէն չհանի:

*The raven came and plucked out my child's eye; I was a new
 bride, so I didn't cry.*

[Lit.: ..., "I didn't say a word." In the old-fashioned family,
 newly wed brides were not supposed to speak.]

Զխօսող հարսը դռները կը կոտրէ:

A silent daughter-in-law will break doors.

Փեսայ
Sons-in-law

Փեսի շուաք, փշի շուաք:

The shadow of a son-in-law, the shadow of a thorn.

Տուչմանս փեսի յոյսին չմնայ:

I wouldn't wish my enemy to depend on a son-in-law.

Տան փեսայ, չան փեսայ:

A live-in son-in-law is a dog's son-in-law.

[Refers to a son-in-law living in the house of his wife's parents; such sons-in-law are not popular.]

Գիշերը քուն, ցերեկն արթուն, փեսաները սիրելի են մարդուն:

In the day they work, at night they rest; those sons-in-law are always best.

Տնփեսան որ կայ, ոտի տակ ընկած փալաս ա:

A live-in son-in-law is a mat under the feet.

Գրողը մտաւ տունը, բոլորը փեսին երեսը նայեցին:

The grogh [Angel of Death] entered the house and everybody looked at the son-in-law.*

[i.e. Sons-in-law are unwanted.]

Հարսն ու փեսին՝ լոյսը փուչ ա, մութն անուչ ա:

A bride and groom hate sunlight; they love the night.

Փեսայ ու քենի, քչպապ ու գինի:

Brother-in-law and keni, are like kebob* and wine.*

[There is an affinity between a man and his wife's sister.]

Նոր փեսէն անուչ կ'ըլնի, նոր հարսը՝ սիրովի:

When newly wed, a son-in-law is sweet, a daughter-in-law dear.

Փեսայ, ուշ է եկէ, անուշ է եկէ:

A son-in-law who comes rarely comes dearly.

Անարժան փեսէն աներանց ունեցածը իրանը գիտի:

A worthless son-in-law thinks his in-laws' wealth is his own.

Զոքանչի սիրած փեսին աները կ'ատէ:

A father-in-law hates his wife's favorite son-in-law.

Փեսէն զոքանչի սիրեկանն է:

The son-in-law is the mother-in-law's favorite.

Փեսէս տուն եկաւ, երեսս դոյն եկաւ:

My son-in-law showed up, my face again lit up.

Հարսը մէրանցը, փեսան՝ աներանցը:

A daughter-in-law sides with her parents, a son-in-law with his in-laws.

[i.e., Married daughters hold on to their parents; and they predispose their husbands to do the same.]

Կնքահայր

Godfathers

Կնքելու տէրն եմ, հո ապրեցնելու էլ տէրը չեմ:

I am willing to baptize (the child), but not to support (him).

[Used by someone who shirks excessive responsibilities.]

Քաւորը փոխիւ, մեռոնը կոխիւ:

Changing the godfather is tainting the chrism (holy oil).

Քաւորին դրին տանուտէր, առաջ սանամօրը դրեց էշին:

They put the godfather in charge, he seated the sanamayr on the donkey first.*

[Expressing the godfather's fondness of his godchild's mother.]

Եւ հօրն ու մօրը, եւ ծուռ ու մուռ կնքահօրը:
 (The child resembles) either the mother and father, or the odd
 godfather.

Կնքահար ըլլալը թանգ է, անուն դնելը բան չէ:
 Being a godfather is costly, giving a name costs nothing.

Ամէն գաթայ էլ գաթայ է, սանամօրը գաթան քրքշան է:
 Every gata* is a gata, but the sanamayr*'s gata is crispiest.
 [Referring to the godfather who extolls his godchild's mother
 above all other women]

Հարսանիք Weddings

Հարսնետունը առանց լաց չի լինի, մեռելատունն առանց
 խնդում:
 There is no wedding without tears, and no funeral without
 cheers.

Շուտ կարգուողը, չուտ ակրատ (նախաճաշ) ուտողը չի
 փոշմանի:
 He who marries early and has breakfast early has no regrets.

Հարսնոցին խելք պէտք է, հոգու հացին՝ ուժ:
 For a wedding you need brains, for a wake lots of strength
 [i.e., financial strength].

Թեզ ճամբայ ելնողն ու թէզ կարգուողը չեն փոշմանի:
 He who sets out early and marries early has no regrets.

Ո՛չ հարսանիքն է պակսում, ո՛չ սուգը:
 There is no shortage of weddings, nor of funerals.

Պսակ թէ մահ տարիք չգիտի:
 Death and marriage do not know age.

Մահը հօրս, հարսանիքն աղբորս:

The wake for my father, the wedding for my brother.

Հէ՛մ լանք, հէ՛մ երթանք:

Let's cry, and still go.

[A bride cries as part of the ritual when she leaves her parents' house. Used when eagerness must be hidden.]

Օժիտ

Dowry

Կնկալ երեք բաժինը լաց է, մէկն էլ չորեղէն:

A woman's dowry is three-parts tears and one-part clothes.

Աղջիկ ունեցող մօր մէկ ձեռքը ծոցը կ'ըլլայ:

A girl's mother has to keep one hand on her chest.

[Message: The costs of a girl's dowry are endless.]

Աղջիկն օրեկան, բաժինքը տարեկան:

The girl is one day old, her dowry one year old.

[i.e., The dowry should grow faster than the child.]

Մօր անունը, աղջկան օժիտ:

The mother's name is the daughter's dowry.

*Կնկալ բերած փողը դռան զանգակ ա, անց ու դարձ
անելիս, ճակատիդ կը դիպչի:*

*The money which your wife brought (as a dowry), is a bell
over your door; it hits your forehead every time you go in and out.*

Կնկալ բաժինքով մարդ չես դառնայ:

Your wife's dowry won't make you amount to anything.

Կնկալ բերած դրամը դրամագլուխ չի դառնար:

The money your wife brought in cannot become capital.

[i.e., You cannot make profit from your wife's dowry.]

Ճէհէզդով (օժիտ) հարսը կ'ուտի հէ՛մ իրեն բերածը, հէ՛մ
էրկանը դատածը:

*A bride with a dowry will spend both her own and her
husband's money.*

Բաժինքը մաշ, ինքը դուժաշ:

Her dowry will fade away, her goodness will stay.

Լաւը բաժին կ'ըլլայ գէշին
The good go to the bad

Ափսո՛ս շաքար, շան բերան:

Too bad, the sugar is in the dog's mouth.

Շերամն ընկէ շան բերան:

The silkworm ended up in the dog's mouth.

Աղէկ մսի կտոր ա, ի՛նչ անեմ շան բերանն ա:

It is a good piece of meat; alas, it is in the dog's mouth.

Լաւը վատին, վատը լաւին:

The good to the bad, the bad to the good.

[i.e., The good never finds its match.]

Լաւ տանձը արջն ա ուտում:

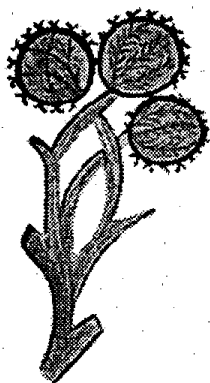
It's the bear who eats the good pear.

[i.e., Unworthy men marry the best girls.]

Աղջիկը երկնքից ըլնէր, ում ձեռը հասնէր, նա առնէր:

*A girl should be up in the sky; he who takes her should be the
one who can reach high.*

IV
Մարդու նկարագիրը
Human Character



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Խոնարհ և համեստ
Humble and modest

Բարատու ծառը գլուխը կախ կը գցի:
The fruit-bearing tree will bend its head.

Բարատու ծառին քար գցող չատ կ'ըլի:
Many will stone a fruit-bearing tree.
[i.e., A worthy person will always be criticized.]

Բերան ունի, լեզու չունի:
Some have a mouth, but no tongue.
[About humble people.]

Խելացի և յիմար
Wise and foolish

Գիտունի հետ քար քաշի, անգէտի հետ փլաւ մի՛ ուտի:
It's better to carry stones with a wise man than to eat pilaf with a fool.*

Լաւ է գիտունին գերի, քան անգէտին սիրելի:
Better to be a wise man's slave than a fool's friend.

Գիտուն մարդը լացացնելը լաւ ա, քան անգէտը ծիծաղացնելը:
It's better to make a wise man cry than a fool laugh.

Գիտուն մեղաւորը լաւ ա, քանց թէ անգէտ արդարը:
A wise sinner is better than an innocent fool.

Յիմարը տալիս է, խելօքն առնում է:
The fool gives, the wise man takes.

Գժին բանի դիր, հետը գնա:
If you put a fool to work, go with him.

Գիժն ու հարբածը մէկ ա:
A fool and a drunkard are two of a kind.

Խելքը տարիքին մէջ չէ, գլխուն մէջ է:
Brains are not in the age, but in the head.

Խելքը մեծ ու պզտիկ չի հարցներ:
Brains don't ask if you're young or old.

Խենդին ուտենք, խելօքինը՝ պահենք:
Let's use up the fool's, and save the wise man's.

Խելօքի բեռը խելին չալակը:
The wise man's load is on the fool's back.

Անխելքի չուանով հոր մի՛ մտնի:
Don't climb down a well on a fool's rope.

Խենդը քուն, բախտն արթուն:
The fool is asleep, his luck is awake.

Խենդը տասը փարա գցեց ծակը, քառասուն տուաւ հանեց:
The fool dropped ten pennies down a hole and spent forty to fish them out.

Խելին գլուխը չուտ չի ճերմկի:
A fool's hair won't turn grey fast.

Գիժը մի քար գցեց հորը, հազար իմաստուն չկարացին հանել:
The fool threw a stone into the well; a thousand wise men couldn't get it out.

Բանը խելքով կ'երթայ առաջ:
It's the brain that keep things going.

Խելքը լաւ է, քանց դովլաթը (հարստութիւն):
Brains are better than wealth.

Աստուած որ ուզում ա մէկի տունը քանդի, առաջ խելքն
ա առնում:

When God wants to destroy a man, he first takes away his brain.

Ո՛չ խելօքներէ հեռանաս, ո՛չ ալ խենդերուն մօտենաս:
Don't move away from wise men, nor approach the fool.

Գտակը մենծ, տակը դատարկ:
A big cap, empty underneath.

Մինչեւ խելացին բռակցաւ, ծուռն զգետ անցաւ:
*By the time the wise man took off his shoes, the fool had
crossed the river.*

Գլուխը հաստ, ծուծը բարակ:
The head is thick, the brain is thin.

Խելք որ բաժնեցին, գացեր էր մարագ (հարդանոց):
When brains were distributed, he was in the hayloft.

Գժի ջաղացքը Աստուած կ'աղայ:
It's God who makes the fool's mill run.

Գժի աչքումը խելօքն էլ գիժ կ'երեւայ:
In the eyes of the fool, wise men seem foolish too.

Գժի հետ գիժ չեն լինի:
Don't become foolish with the fool.

Գիժը խելօքին մասխարա կը գցէ:
The fool makes fun of the wise.

Գիժը չի ամաչի, գժի տէրը կ'ամաչի:
The embarrassment is not for the fool but for his master.

Խելառին կոտոշ չի բուսնի:
Fools don't grow horns.
[i.e., Foolish people have no visible marks.]

Խենդին կռվն ա կորեր, խելօքին խրատ է եղեր:
The fool lost his cow, the wise man learned from it.

Խելառն որ չըլնի, խելօքն ապրիլ չի:
If not for the fool, the wise man couldn't live.

Շատ խելացին ծռուն աղբէր է:
Too much intelligence borders on stupidity.

Մինչեւ խելօքը միտք անի, գիժը տղին կը պսակի:
While the wise man thinks it over, the fool marries off his son.

Մինչեւ խելօքը մտածի, գիժն իր բանը կը տեսնի:
While the wise man reflected, the fool got what he wanted.

Անմիտը միշտ դժբախտ չի մնար, և ոչ իմաստունը մշտնջենական բարեբախտ:
The fool is not always unlucky, nor is the wise man always lucky.

Խելք ու տարտ չունեցողը երկար կ'ապրի:
He who has no brain and no worries lives long.

Նայէ որ իմաստուն ըլլաս, բայց տգէտ երեւնալ սորվիս:
Make sure you are learned, but learn to look ignorant.

Անամօթ, անղգամ, անառակ
Shameless, insolent, immoral

Ո՛չ Աստծուց կը վախենայ, ո՛չ մարդուց կ'ամչնայ:
Neither afraid of God, nor ashamed of man.

Անամօթ մարդը, օխտը (եօթը) չապիկ ունի, մէկը վրադ կը նետէ:
A shameless person has seven shirts, one he will throw on you.
[An insolent man will project his bad qualities on to others.]

Ամօթը ամ չցողի համար է:
Shame is for those who know shame.

Անամօթ մարդի երեսը թքեցին, ասեց. անձրեւ է գալիս:
They spat on the shameless man's face; he said, it is raining.

Ճարպիկ գողը տանտէրը կը բռնէ:
A skillful thief nabs the landlord (as a thief).

Եկաւ դրսենին, դուրս ըրաւ զներսինին:
The outsider came and kicked out the insider.

Անդաստիարակ, անկիրթ
Ill-bred, uneducated

Էշ կերել է, էշ մեծացել:
He ate like an ass, he grew up like an ass.

Փորը ճեղքես նէ, այբ մը չելլեր:
If you slit open his stomach, not even an Ayb would come out.*
[About a person deprived of education.]

Այբը տեսնելիս, մարդակ (տանիքի գերան) կը կարծէ:
He sees an "A" and thinks it's a roof.

Անհասկացող, անհաղորդ
Dense, stupid

Իմացողին մէկ, չիմացողին՝ հազար:
For the bright say it once; for the dumb a thousand times.

Գիլի գլխին աւետարան կարդացին, ասաւ, թէ՛ղ արէք,
«չխարը գնաց»:
*They preached to the wolf (not to devour the sheep); he said,
"Hurry up, the flock is leaving the pasture."*

Ասողին լսող է պէտք:
A speaker needs a listener.

Հասկացողին մին ասա, չհասկացողին՝ հա՛կաց, հա՛ ասա:
To the understanding say it once; to the dense say it many
times.

Խելօքին մին, անխելքին՝ հազար ու մին:
To the intelligent, once; to the dummy, a thousand and one
times.

Իմացողին սազ, չիմացողին զուռնէն էլ հերիք չի:
For the listener the saz* is enough; for the deaf even the
zurna* is not enough.

Հէշտ է քարին խոտ բուսցնել, քան թէ քեզի խօսք
հասկցնել:
It is easier to grow grass on stones than to teach you reason.

Անճրեւն ի՛նչ անի քարին, խրատն ի՛նչ անի չարին:
What can rain do to a stone, and counsel to the wicked?

Սեւը սապոնն ի՛նչ անի, խելը խրատն ի՛նչ անի:
What can soap do for the dark-skinned, or advice for the
thick-skinned?

Կոյրի առաջ հա՛ դու ճրագ վառի:
There is no use in burning a candle in front of the blind.

Անհոգ և անտարբեր Careless and indifferent

Գիժը դնաց հարսնեւորուն, ասեց. «Էստեղ լաւ ա քանց մեր
տուն»:
The fool went to a wedding and said, "Here I like it more than
in my house."

Առսրդ (անզգայ) մարդուն ամէն օր գարուն է:
For the unfeeling every day is a spring day.

Գժի համար ամէն օր Նոր Տարի ա:
For the fool every day is New Year's Day.

Գժի համար ամէն օր Զատիկ ա:
For the fool every day is Easter.

Գժի համար ամէն օր Հարսանիք ա:
For the fool every day is a wedding day.

Առսրդ մարդը շատ կ'ապրի:
An unfeeling person lives long.

Ականջին մէկէն կը մտնէ, միւսէն կ'ելլէ:
It goes in one ear and comes out the other.

**Անպէտ, անշնորհք
*Good-for-nothing, unfit***

Մարդ կայ մարդ ա, մարդ էլ կայ էչոց վատ ա:
Some people have class, others are worse than an ass.

Իշու մարիֆաթը (շնորհք) զուլն է:
Braying is the donkey's only talent.

Մարդ էլ կայ, մարդակ էլ:
Some are people, some are roofbeams.

Կարիճին ասին, կիճդ դեղ ա, խոր խրեց:
They told the scorpion, "Your sting is a remedy," he stung deeper.

Ո՛չ թքելու ա, ո՛չ էլ կուլ տալու:
He is neither to be spit out, nor to be swallowed.

Իշունն զոռոցին ըսեր են. «Ձայնդ անսպա՛ռ.» ալ զոռոցը չէ կտրեր:

They said to a braying ass, "What a beautiful voice!" He hasn't stopped braying since.

Թէ օրհնեմ, օրհնելու չի, անիծեմ, անիծելու չի:
He is neither to be blessed, nor to be cursed.

Ոտը դրած տեղը կը չորանայ:
Wherever he steps, it withers.

Կոխած տեղը չայիր (մարգագետին) չի բուսնիր:
Wherever he steps, no pasture grows.

Ջուրը դացող, ծառաւ դարձող:
He goes to the well and comes back thirsty.

Ունքը սրբած ժամանակ աչքը կը հանէ:
While wiping his brow, he plucks out his eye.

Անբաշարին (անճարակ) ջուալը (պարկ) դրին, ոտները դուրս մնաց:

They put the clumsy man into the sack, his feet jutted out.

Բարեւ տուողին էչը կը սատկի:
If he greets a man, the man's donkey will die.

Իր տանը կրակ, ուրիշին ճրագ:
To his own, a (raging) fire, to strangers, a (shining) light.

Անտեղեակ

Ignorant

Շուաքի կուժը, ի՛նչ գիտէ արեւի ուժը:

What does a pitcher, standing in the shade, know of the sun's power?

Լսել է Բաղդադի խուրմա կայ, չի գիտեր ինչպէս կ'ուտեն:
He knows of dates in Baghdad, but knows not how to eat them.

Ով տուն չէ շիներ, գիտէ սիւնն ի մէջն է բուսեր:
He who has never built a house, thinks the pillar grew in it.

Չտեսին տղայ եղաւ, բռնեց ճուճուլը կտրեց:
To a bumpkin a son was born, he went and castrated him.
[Said about people who out of ignorance act stupidly.]

Ես ասում եմ ներքինի եմ, նա ասում ա, քանի՞ տղայ ունես:
I am saying, "I am an eunuch"; he is asking, how many children I have.

Էշին ռեհան կը տան, որ հոտ անի, բերանը կը տանի:
They give the donkey the basil to smell, he takes it in his mouth.

Էշի ահանջում քնած է:
He is sleeping in the donkey's ear.
[About people who are unaware of what goes on around them.]

Անտնտես, չռայլ **Improvident, wasteful**

Մի օր բարի-բարկենդանք, մի օր անօթի սնդանդանք:
One day feasting, another day fasting.

Շափ-չափ կ'ուտեն, չաբթով կ'աչեն:
They eat like pigs, then starve for weeks.

Գդալ-գդալ ժողուեցի, չերեփ-չերեփ ցրուեցի:
I saved it by the spoon, I spent it by the ladle.

Պարտքը եղեր է հազարը, նորէն կ'երթայ պազարը:
His debts are to the top; he still goes out to shop.

Դատիմ, դատիմ, տամ շներուն:
I saved day by day, to give it away to the dogs.

Առաջ կ'ըլնես ձեռնաբաց, վերջը կ'ըլնես գլխաբաց:
First you are open-handed, then you are bare-headed.

Ամէն օր սիւսլի քալողը, կիրակի օրը հագնելիք չունի:
He who dresses up every day finds nothing to wear on Sunday.

Լէն փորիկ, ընկեր է նեղ օրիկ:
The belly that was greedy, soon found itself needy.

Տալով, տալով, ծովն էլ կը հատնի:
By giving and giving, even the ocean will run dry.

Բարկացկոտ Ill-tempered

Բարկացող մարդը շուտ կը ծերանայ:
Ill-tempered people grow old fast.

Բարկութեամբ ելնողը վնասով կը նստի:
He who rises in anger sits down in injury.

Թունդ քացախը իր ամանը կը ճաքացնի:
A strong vinegar will crack its own vessel.

Պղինձը շատ ուր ըլնի, իր վրէն կը թափի:
An overflowing pot pours over itself.

Ելած սիրտը, վարար գետը, մէկ է:
An aggravated heart and an overflowing river are the same.

Եսամոլ և շահասէր
Egocentric and profit-seeking

Առաջ մերը, յետոյ մերոնցը:
First for me, then for my folks.

**Մէկի աչքն ա դուրս եկեր, մէկէլն ըսաւ՝ տու՛ր, տանեմ
կատուիս:**
*One has an eye taken out; the other says, let me take it to my
cat.*

Մէկին միրուքը վառեցաւ, կեցի՛ր տաքնամ, ըսաւ միւսը:
*Someone's beard caught fire; let me warm myself, said the
other.*

Մօրուքս բռնկեր է, կ'ըսէ. կեցի՛ր չիպուիս վառեմ:
My beard is on fire; he says, let me light my pipe.

Առաջ մորթուս, յետոյ որդուս:
First for my skin, then for my kin [lit.: ... my son].

Փորս մօտ է, քանց քորս:
My own stomach is closer than my sister's.

Կատուի մուկ բռնելը, իր փորի համար է:
The cat catches mice for its own stomach.

Քեզ շատ կ'ուզեմ, համա ինձ քեզանէ շատ կ'ուզեմ:
I like you very much, but I like myself much more.

Հարեւանիս կը սիրեմ, որ հաւարիս գայ հասնի:
I love my neighbor for rushing out when I call for help.

**Հաց ու գինի ունիս, իմ սէրը դունն ես, հաց ու գինի
չունիս, իմ դէլը դունն ես:**
*If you have bread and wine, you are my angel; if you don't,
you are my dev*.*

Հարեւանիս սիրում եմ, որ մատիս դեղ անի:
I love my neighbor for mending my finger.

Էն հարեւանին մեռնիմ, որ ձուիս աղ կ'ընէ:
I would lay down my life for that neighbor who salts my egg.

Գայլը թողածը կ'ախտասայ, հովիւը՝ յափշտակուածը:
The wolf deplores what he left, the shepherd the theft.

Տէրը տարածն էր լալիս, գէլը՝ մնացածը:
The owner cries for the missing; the wolf for the missed.

Մեռնեմ էն ճպոռտ աչքերաց, որ իմ հացին կարագ քսի:
I would give my life for those sickly eyes that spread butter on my bread.

[“Sickly eyes” stands for a person with a revolting appearance.]

Իմ զուռնէն չփչեմ, ինչ ա քու էլը հուշտ չըլնի՞ (չխրչի):
Should I stop blowing my zurna, so your donkey won't be annoyed?*

Աչքդ մենակ քեզ է լոյս տալիս:
Your eyes give sight to you alone.

Ընենց ծիծաղա, որ ես էլ ծիծաղեմ:
Laugh in a way that I can laugh as well.

Փիլաւ ուտելը լաւ ա, համա մի օր մեր տանը, մի օր ձեր տանը:
It's good to eat pilaf, but let's have it one day at our place, one day at yours.*

Մի՛ լինիր ուրագի պէս, միշտ դէպի քեզ. այլ եղիր սղոցի պէս, մէկ դէպի մեզ, մէկ դէպի քեզ:
Don't be like an axe, always aimed toward you; be like a saw, once toward us, once toward you.

Երախտագէտ և անպերախտ
Grateful and ungrateful

Ինչ աղբրից մարդ ջուր խմի, էն աղբրին քար չեն գցի:
You should not cast stones in a well from which you drink water.

Հաւն որ հաւ ա, որ ջուր խմայ, Աստուած կ'իշկայ:
Even the chicken looks up to God after drinking water.

Շունը կերած տեղը կը հաջէ:
A dog barks where it's fed.

Շունը տիրոջը կը ճանչնայ:
A dog recognizes its master.

Շունն էլ իր տիրոջը վրայ չի հաջի:
Not even a dog barks at its master.

Կաթնատու կովի պտուկին չեն թքի:
You shouldn't spit on the udder of a milk cow.

Թող ասեն գէշ ա, թող չասեն էշ ա:
Let them call me nasty, but not an ass.

Ուտող – ուրացող:
He (is a person who) would eat, and then deny it.

Սառած օձն տաքցնես, առաջ քեզի կը խայթէ:
Warm a frozen serpent, and it will bite you first.

Օձի ձագը, առաջ պահող-մեծացնողին կը խածնէ:
The snake's young will bite his caretaker first.

Իրանց տանը կուտ են ուտում, խալխի տանը ձու ածում:
They eat grain in their own home, and lay eggs in someone else's.

Մարդ մարդի մի բաղ կը տայ, մարդ մարդի մի ճուղ
խաղող չի տայ:
*Some will give you a vineyard; some won't give you even a
bunch of grapes.*

Ղառղան պահէ, որ աչքդ փորէ:
Keep a raven to pierce your eye.

Գոգիդ նստեմ, միրուքդ փետեմ:
Let me sit on your lap and pull out your beard.

Հացը ծնկանը, աչքը կնկանը:
The host's bread on his lap, his eye on the host's wife.

Ում ասում եմ, իմը դուն ես, ասում է, իմ դեւը դուն ես:
Whomever I call my love, calls me a dev.*

Որուն աչքս ըսի, աչքս հանեց:
Whomever I called "apple of my eye," pulled out my eye.

Աղբիւրը որ մոնտառես, ջուրը ո՞րտեղից պտի խմես:
If you dirty the well, from where will you drink water?

Ձին նստաւ, Աստուած մոռցաւ, ձիուց իջաւ, ձին մոռցաւ:
*He rode the horse, he forgot God; he got off the horse, he
forgot the horse.*

Երես առած, չփացած, աներես
Spoiled, pampered, intrusive, impertinent

Երես տուինք, աստառ ուղեց:
We gave him the fabric and he asked for the lining.

Գովացին Ալիխան, ելաւ քաքեց պատուխան:
*They praised Alikhan [male name], he went and shat on the
divan. [lit.: ... "on the window."]*

Մին մի՛ տա, որ երկու չուզի:

Don't give him one, he will ask for two.

Թաթին տեղ արաւ, կրունկին էլ կ'ուզէ:

He made room for his palm, now he wants room for his heel.

Ոտաց տեղ արեց, գլխուն էլ կ'ուզէ:

He made room for his feet, now he wants room for his head.

Փարէ մը տուինք խօսեցողցինք, երկուսը կու տանք, ձէնը չի կտրէ:

We gave him one penny to talk; with two pennies we cannot shut him up.

Բարեւ տաս, Բարեկենդան կու գայ:

If you greet him, he will visit you at Paregentan.*

Շունը որ խաղող ուտել սորվի, բաղը կը քանդի:

If the dog gets used to eating grapes, he will destroy the vineyard.

Երեսը թքնես, անձրեւ կու գայ, կ'ըսէ:

Spit in his face and he will say it's raining.

Դռնէն վռնտես, երդիքէն ներս կ'ընկնի:

If you throw him out the door, he will come in through the sky-light.

Երկերեսանի, կեղծաւոր և չողոքորթ

Two-faced, deceitful, and hypocritical

Երեսանց հայելի, տակեւանց ածելի:

On the surface a mirror, underneath a razor.

Դիմացէն հայելի, ետեւէն ածելի:

From the front a mirror, from the back a razor.

Տանը հայելի, դուրսը անուշի:
At home a mirror, outside a razor.

Դուրսը քահանայ, ներսը սատանայ:
Outside a priest, inside a beast.

Ձեմ ուզում, դրական դիր:
I don't want it, put it in my pocket.

Ներսէն խնամի, դրսէն թշնամի:
Inside an in-law, outside a foe.

Գիշերը գողութիւն կ'ընէ, ցերեկը «Տէր ողորմեա» կ'ըսէ:
At night he's a thief, in the day a man of belief.

Գիշերը մարդ կը մորթէ, ցերեկը ճամբայ կը հարթէ:
At night he is a killer, in the day he is a road builder.

Մէկ ձեռքով խաչ կը հանէ, մէկալով գողութիւն կ'ընէ:
With one hand he crosses himself, with the other he steals.

Վրէժ գառան մորթի ես առել, տակից գազան ես:
You put on a lamb skin, underneath you are a beast.

Գէլի հետ գառն ա ուտում, տիրոջ հետ վայելուկ է անում:
With the wolf he devours the lamb; with the owner he laments it.

Շան կաղալուն մի' հաւատա:
Don't believe a dog's limping.

Շան կաղալը մինչ գիրու տեսնալն է:
The dog's limping will last until he sees the wolf.

Դրսից շատ տաք, ներսից շան քաք:
Outside witty, inside shitty.

Շատ անուշ է, տակը փուշ է:
Very sweet, but thorny underneath.

Սուտ խենդ է եղեր, վանքի հաւերը կ'ուտէ:
He pretends to be a fool and devours the monastery's chickens.
 [Said about those who feign naivety, only to take advantage]

Շողոքորթ գառը օխտը մօր կը ծծի:
A two-faced lamb would suck seven mother sheep.

Քաղցր լեզուն օձը ծակիցը կը հանի:
A sweet tongue can talk the snake out of its den.

Անուշ լեզուն մեղրից քաղցր ա:
A sweet tongue is sweeter than honey.

Լեզուն մեղր, սիրտը լեղի:
His tongue is honey, his heart is gall.

Լաւի յարգը չիմացող
Unable to appreciate the good

Էչն ի՛նչ գիտի, նուչն ի՛նչ է:
What does the donkey know of the almond?

Սոխակի երգը իշի համար գոռոց է:
The nightingale's song is to the donkey a roar.

Շունն ի՛նչ գիտի, Շահն ի՛նչ է:
What does a dog know of the Shah?*

Խոզի գլուխը խալիչի վրայ չի կենայ:
The pig's head won't stay on the carpet for long.

Խոզի գլուխը սեղանն են դրել, գլորեւ աղբն է ընկել:
They put the pig's head on the table, it rolled into the garbage.

Սնարհառ

Vain

Ոտին տրեխ չունի, գլխին վարդ է չարում:

She has no shoes to wear, yet she puts roses in her hair.

Տունը չունի գդալ մը թան, սիւսլի-փիւսլի կ'ելլէ մէյտան:

At home she has no tan to drink, yet walks the streets in silk and mink.*

Տունը չկայ թան ու փոշի, գլուխը կապեր ա կարմիր փուշի (բարակ գլխաշոր):

At home she has to crave and starve, but still she wears a purple scarf.

Շոր չունի հագնելու, ֆայտոնով կ'երթայ քաքնելու:

She is as poor as one can be, but takes a coach to go to pee.

Ծոյլ, անբան

Lazy, inactive

Ալարողի (ծոյլի) ապրանքը լաց կ'ըլնի:

The idle man's goods will cry.

Անբանը հաց ուտելիս առողջ է, բանելիս՝ հիւանդ:

The lazy person is healthy when it comes to eating and sick when it comes to working.

Ով ալարի, ո՛չ դալարի:

He who does not strive, will never thrive.

Անդատել ձեռք անօթի փորի վրայ է:

An idle hand will rest on an empty stomach.

Ամռան պառկեմ հովեր, ձմռան հատին կովեր:

In summer I lie in the shade; in winter my cows lie dead.

Ծուլութիւն չի գտնի արքայութիւն:
Laziness will never find happiness.

Ես Աղա, դու Աղա, մեր ջաղացքը ո՞վ աղայ:
I am an Agha*, you are an Agha; who will turn our mill?

Ես ուստա, դու ուստա, բա մեր աղբը ո՞վ դուրս տայ:
I am a boss, and you are a boss, who will take out our dross?

Հաց դնեմ, հասի, բան դնեմ, փախի:
I set the table, you run for it; I give you work, you run from it.

Խմոր ուտելուց ուղտ ա, բեռ տանելուց՝ աւանակ:
To eat cookies, he is a camel; to carry loads, he is an ass.

Բանի անունը տալուց գլխի ցաւը բռնում ա:
When he hears of work, his headache starts.

Ամէն բանին բանգէտ ա, տախտն աւլելուն, անգէտ ա:
When talking, he's an expert; when sweeping the floor, he's
inept.

Հոգը տարուան, բանը օրուան:
The worry of one year, the work of one day.
[On procrastination]

Թամբալի (ծոյլ) համար չաբաթը օխտը (եօթը) կիրակի:
For the lazy bum, there are seven Sundays in a week.

Ծառի տակին պառկելուն, բերանդ տանձ չի ընկնի:
If you lie under the tree, pears won't fall into your mouth.

Բան բանողին բան չատ, պարապ պառկողին, շուք չատ:
For the worker lots of trade, for the loafer lots of shade.

Հարամ հաց ուտողը երկար չի ապրի:
He who eats stolen bread will not live long.

Ուտելուց չորս ձեռնանի կը դառնայ, անելուց, կը չոնթանայ (հաշմանար):

To eat he is prepared, to work he is impaired.

[Lit.: When eating, he has four hands; when working, he is disabled.]

Յամառ Stubborn

Կը մեռնեմ, մեղա Աստու չեմ ասի:
I would rather die than repent.

Կատուին կտրիցն էլ գցես, մէջքը գետնին չի առնի:
If you drop a cat even from the roof, its back will never touch the ground.

Դու ինչ ուզում ես ասա, նա իր էջն ա քշում:
Say what you will, he will have his way.
[Lit.: ..., "he is driving his donkey ahead."]

Դու ինչ ուզում ես ասա, նա իր գոռնէն ա փչում:
Whatever you say, he will blow his zurna.*

Իշու ինատը (յամառութիւն) կամրջի վրայ կը բռնէ:
The donkey turns stubborn just on the bridge.

Ես կ'ըսեմ, ես կը լսեմ:
I am talking, I am listening.
[Used when the stubborn are not paying attention.]

Կծծի և ագահ Stingy and greedy

Լու քերթելով մարդ չեն դառնալ:
You can't get anywhere by skinning a flea.

Մարդու աչքը մի բուռ հողով կը կշտանայ:
Merely a handful of earth will fill up one's eyes.
 [i.e., One ceases to be greedy when he dies.]

Լուից եղ հանող ա:
He would squeeze oil from a flea.

Օձ ընկնի ձեռը կը խուղէ:
If he gets hold of a snake, he will skin it.

Հաւկիթ որ տայ, մէջը դեղնուց չի գտնուիր:
If he gives you an egg, it won't have a yolk.

Եզան տակը հորթ կը փնտռէ:
He looks for a calf under an ox.

Չեն ուտեր, որ չքաքնեն:
They don't eat, so they don't shit.

Քիթին քաքը ուտող է:
He would eat the snot from his nose.

Իր քաքը կ'ուտի, դատածը չի ուտի:
He would eat his droppings, but not his savings.

Շանից մազ պոկելը խէր ա:
Plucking a hair from a dog is still a gain.

Փիլաւ եփողի ապուրը կեր, ապուր եփողի փիլաւը մի' ուտեր:
Eat the soup of one who cooks pilaf; don't eat the pilaf of one who cooks soup.*

Կոպեկի վրայ քառասուն հանգոյց կը գցի:
For a penny, he would turn forty somersaults.

Չուտողի մալը ուտողին հալալ ա:
What the miser won't eat suits those who eat it.

Ձեռին օձ ըլնի, մարդու վրայ չի գցի:

If he had a snake, he wouldn't throw it on anyone.

[i.e., He would not give away anything.]

Կծծիի մալը փեսաները կ'ուտեն, վիզը՝ ոջիլը:

The goods of the greedy will be eaten by his sons-in-law, his neck by the lice.

Մարդու աչքը ծակ է:

Eyes are bottomless pits.

Գիլու բնի բոլորը ոսկոր իսկի կ'աւելնա՞յ:

Will there ever be leftover bones around a wolf's den?

Տանձն ինծի, խնձորն ինծի, սերկելիլն էլ սիրտս կ'ուզի:

The pear for me; the apple for me; I crave the quince as well.

Սոխ ու սխտորը հիսապ ընողը փաչա չ'ուտեր:

He who scrimps on onion and garlic will not eat pacha.*

Ո՛չ կ'ուտեմ, ո՛չ կ'ուտեցնեմ, դարակը կը դնեմ, կը հոտեցնեմ:

I won't eat it, nor will I let you taste it; I'll put it in the drawer and waste it.

Մարդ կայ որ մեղքն ալ ուրիշի չի տար:

Some people wouldn't give away even their sins.

Ագահն ասաց, ես խնդացի. Աստուածն ասաց, չհաւատացի:

The miser said, "I was a happy guy." God said, "That is a lie."

Ձրիակեր, տգրուկ *Parasitic and freeloading*

Պապան բերէ, մաման եփէ, տատան ուտէ:

Daddy will bring, Mommy will cook, baby will eat.

Սատկած էչ ման կու գայ, որ նալերը քաշէ:

He is looking for a dead donkey so he can pull off its horseshoes.

Հօրը բերածը կերել է, մօրը մանածը հագեր է:

He spent what his father won, he wore out what his mother spun.

Ճարպիկ ու հնարագետ
Skillful and resourceful

Սատանից օխտն (եօթը) օր առաջ է ծնուել:

He was born seven days before the devil.

Ղազարը գիտէ իրեն պազարը:

Lazar [male name] knows his bazaar.

Դատարկ դցում է, որ լիքը բռնի:

He throws it empty to catch it full.

Ինչ քար վերցնես, տակէն դուրս կու գայ:

Whatever stone you lift, he will be underneath.

Գիտունն աղուէսը երկու ոտով թակարդ կ'ընկնի:

The skillful fox gets trapped with both feet.

Ճարպիկ մուկը երկու ոտով կ'ընկնի թալաք:

The clever mouse gets trapped by both feet.

Անսկզբունք և յարմարուող
Lacking principles and conforming to others

Ջուրը կը տեսնէ, ձուկ կ'ըլլայ. ծակը կը տեսնէ, մուկ կ'ըլլայ:

Seeing water, he is a fish; seeing a hole, he is a mouse.

*Զմեռը համամ չի, ամառը բաղմանչի:
In winter, bath attendant; in summer, gardener.*

*Քամին որ կողմը փչէ, հոն կը դառնայ:
Wherever the wind blows, there he turns.*

*Գիլու տարածը հօր հոգուն մատաղ է ասում:
What the wolf steals, he passes off as his father's matagh*.*

Մէջընկան Meddlesome

*Ով հարս, դու հարսնաքուր:
Where there is a bride, you are the bridesmaid.*

*Ով փեսայ, դու փեսաղբէր:
Where there is a groom, you are the best man.*

*Որտեղ երկու շուն լծեն, դու էնտեղ սէլուոր կ'ըլնես:
Where they yoke two dogs, you will be the driver.*

*Անպոչ գդալի պէս ամէն աման կը մտնի:
He falls in every vessel like a ladle without a handle.*

*Ուրտեղ պուտուկ, ինք բերանի խուփ:
Where there is a pot, he will be the lid.*

*Ուրտեղ մանղալ, ինք մէջը մաչա:
Where there is a brazier, he will be the poker.*

*Հնդկաստան ընկոյզ կտրեն, մէջէն կ'ելլէ:
If they crack a walnut in India, he will come out of it.*

*Իրան աչքի գերանը թողած, ուրիշի չոփն է ման գալիս:
Ignoring the beam in his own eye, he looks for the splinter in
someone else's eye.*

Դեղ ունիս քո գլխին արա:
If you have a remedy, cure your head.

Քեզ համար ես քնում, ուրիշի համար երազ տեսնում:
You sleep for yourself, you dream for others.

Կուտ ունիս, քու հաւի առաջն ածիր:
If you have grain, feed your hen.

Խրատ ունիս, գլխիդ տուր, սապոն ունիս՝ շորիդ:
If you have advice, use it for your head; if you have soap, use it for your robe.

Դժուարահաճ և բծախնդիր
Fussy and meticulous

Շատ լաւին ման եկողը, շատ փխին ռաստ կը դայ:
He who searches for the best will end up with the worst.

Շատ մի ընտրի, ընտրտոցը կ'ընկնես:
Don't be choosy, you will lose your choices.

Շատախօս
Talkative

Շատախօսի գլուխը ծակ ա:
A chatterbox has a hole in his head.

Շատ հաջան շունը, ոչխարին գէլ կը բերէ:
A barking dog invites wolves to the sheep.

Երկու ականճ մի բերան, իմացի՛ր խօսքիդ սիրան (կարգը):
Two ears and one mouth, don't be a blabbermouth.

[Lit.: Two ears and one mouth, know when it is your turn to speak.]

Խոռչն է յաղթեր շատախօսին:
Only a deaf man can beat a babbler.

Չաչանակին (շատախօս) ո՞վ սուս կացրուց. - մոռնջը:
Who silenced the chatterbox? The deaf.

Որկրամոր, շատակեր
Gluttonous, voracious

Փոր ու հորը մէկ է:
A belly and a well are the same.

Ծակ բողազը ինչ որ լցնես, ներս կ'երթայ:
The bottomless throat swallows everything you push down it.

Դարմանը (յարդ) քոնը չի, դարմանանոցը հո քոնն ա:
The hay is not yours, the haybarn surely is.

[Referring to a gluttonous guest devouring large amounts of food; "hay" is a metaphor for food and "haybarn" for the stomach.]

Մէկ չուտողէն վախցիր, մէկ ուտողէն:
Beware of those who either eat too much or don't eat at all.

Շատ ուտելը քիչ ուտելուց էլ կը դցի:
If you eat too much, you will be deprived of eating little.
[i.e., If you squander, you will be deprived of necessities.]

Փորը լի, աչքն անօթի:
The stomach is full, the eye is hungry.

Չար, դաժան, չկամ
Nasty, cruel, unkind

Օձին վրայ թքնէ, օձը կը սատկի:
If he spits on the snake, it will die.

Վախեցիր էն մարդուց, որ չի վախենայ Աստծուց:
Beware of those who are not afraid of God.

Արեւ ըլլայ, մարդու վրայ չի ծագեր:
If he were the sun, he wouldn't shine on anyone.

Ագռաւին ասեցին թէ, ծիրտդ դեղ ա, էն էլ գնաց ծովի
 մէջ ծրտեց:
They told the raven, "Your droppings can cure"; he dropped them in the sea.

Գայլը արիւնով ա հարբում:
The wolf gets drunk on blood.

Մատից փուչ հանող պտուղ չի:
He is not the kind to pull a thorn from anyone's finger.

Ո՛չ ինծի կով մը, ո՛չ դրացիիս երկու կով:
I don't want a cow, nor should my neighbor get two.

Կատուին ասին աղբդ դեղ է, խորունկ թաղեց:
When told its excrement is a remedy, the cat buried it deep.

Որ ասէն մէջը դեղ է, ոչ ոքի վրայ չի շռի:
If they told him his urine could cure, he wouldn't urinate on anyone.

Սանդն էլ ա իրա ձեռին, վարսանդն էլ:
Both the sand and the varsang* are in his hands.*
 [i.e., He is very powerful and nasty.]

Քարն էլ ա իրա ձեռին, պոպոքն էլ:
Both the stone and the walnut are in his hands.

Թուղթն էլ ա իրա ձեռին, կալամն էլ:
Both the paper and the pen are in his hands.

Չհաւան, պարծենկոտ և դռռող
Overbearing, boastful and arrogant

Չանեմ, չհաւանեմ:

I do nothing, nor do I like what others do.

Կարօն հաւնաւ Մարոյին, Մարօն չհաւնաւ Կարոյին:

Karo liked Maro, Maro didn't like Karo.

[Said about people who claim to dislike someone when, in fact, they are the rejected ones. Karo is a male name, Maro, a female name.]

Ես ագռաւին հաւանեցի, ագռաւն ինձ չհաւանեց:

I liked the crow, the crow didn't like me.

Կուզիկին աղջիկ չեն տալիս, նա ուզում է զոքանչն էլ սիրուն լինի:

They refuse the hunchback (the hand of) their daughter; he demands that the (future) mother-in-law be beautiful too.

[About an overbearing suitor who tries to cover up his being rejected by demanding even more.]

Բերան չէ, խորան է:

It's not a mouth, it's an altar.

[The altar is used hyperbolically for a big mouth.]

Մեծ սարերն ինքն է ստեղծել, պզտիկները վախից են եղել:

He created the big mountains here; the small ones there grew out of fear.

Աքլորը երդկի գլխին կայնելուց, ասում ա.

«Էս տները ո՞նց են տակիս դիմանում»:

The rooster on the roof wonders:

"How can these houses support my weight?"

Հաւ չեղած, թառ է թռնում:

Before becoming a hen, she jumps on the perch.

Ուղտն ասաց. «Շարքաբ (մետաքսագործ) եմ.» ասացին.
«Ոտք ու ձեռքիդ սազում է»

The camel said, "I am a silkmaker." They said, "Your hands
and feet are surely suited for it."

Գարի հացը ըսաւ. «Բացուիմ»

Ցորեն հացը ըսաւ. «Շատ մի՛ բացուիր, կը կոտորիս»

The barley bread said, "I will rise open."

The wheat bread said, "Don't open too much, you'll pop."

Մուկ չէղած, դրում կը ծակէ:

He is not yet a mouse, yet he nibbles at the pumpkin.

Հորթը որ կովի առաջն ընկնի, գէլը կը տանի:

When the calf walks ahead of the cow, the wolf snatches it.

Պուճուր մարդիկ մեծ երազ կը տեսնան:

Little people dream big dreams.

Դատարկ սէլը շատ ձէն կը հանէ:

An empty carriage makes a lot of noise.

Բանն արա, յետոյ պարծեցիր:

Get things done, then start bragging.

Շատ վեր թռնողը շուտ ցած կ'իջնայ:

He who flies high will fall before long.

Շատ պարծեցողը պարկը կը մտնի:

If you brag too much, you will end up in a bag.

Առուն թռիր, նոր քեզ գովամ:

First jump over the brook, then get my praise.

Գորտին հարցուցին քի. «Ինչու՞ տայմա (չարուենակ) կը
պոռաս» «Ձայնիս զմայլած եմ» ըսաւ:

They asked the frog, "Why do you croak so much?" "I'm fond
of my voice," it replied.

Առաջ ածէ, յետոյ կականես ըրէ (կչկչա):
First lay an egg, then cackle.

Դուն քեզ մի գովեր, թող ուրիշը գովէ:
Don't praise yourself, let others praise you.

Մի ասեղ պիտի առնի, պողպատի փութն ա հարցնում:
To buy a needle, he is asking for the price of a pout* of steel.

Ինքը պզտիկ, լեզուն մեծ:
His size is small, his tongue is big.

Մեծախօսի ձեռքէն բան չի գալ:
A big mouth has clumsy hands.

Փիատէն (հետիոտն) ձիաւորի վրէն ծիծաղում ա:
The footman is laughing at the rider.

Խորոզ չեղած, կը կանչէ:
He crows before becoming a rooster.

Մեծ խօսելով փլաւ չի եփուի, եղ ու բրինձ է հարկաւոր:
You cannot cook pilaf* by talking big; you need butter and
rice.

Ես կու գամ վանուց, ինք կու տայ քարոզ:
I am coming from the convent, he is preaching the sermon.

Ո՛չ մարդանման, ո՛չ մարդահաւան:
He doesn't look like anyone, nor does he like anyone.

Իրեն գովողը կ'իյնայ աղբին կողովը:
A boastful man ends up in the garbage can.

Հպարտը, մի օր կը մտնի պարկը:
The proud, one day, will go into the shroud.

HUMAN CHARACTER

Հպարտ մարդու տակը փուտ է, ինչ որ ասի, սուտ է:
A braggart is full of hot air; what he says is never there.

Պարապ տակառը մեծ ձայն կը հանէ:
An empty barrel makes a lot of noise.

Արժանաւոր և անարժան *Worthy and unworthy*

Մէկ կայ, հազար արժէ, հազար կայ, մէկ չարժէ:
One man can be worth a thousand; a thousand men can be worth not even one.

Մարդ կայ, մարդ ա, մարդ կայ, զարդ ա:
Some people are real people, others are ornaments.

Մարդ մարդու քահանայ, մարդ մարդու սատանայ:
Man can be someone's priest; man can be someone's beast.

Լաւութիւնին լաւութիւն, ամէն մարդու բանն ա,
վատութիւնին լաւութիւն, մարդ մարդու բանն ա:
Return good for good, anyone can; return good for evil, only a real human can.

Վախկոտ *Coward*

Վախկոտ շունը որս չի անի:
A timid dog cannot hunt.

Տանը աւլան, չորումը կատու:
At home a lion, on the field a cat.

Վախկոտի աչքին կատուն գիշերը դեւ է երեւում:
To the coward the cat seems to be a dev at night.*

Վախկոտը մէկ փոստուռայ տեսնէ, հառա՛յ կու տայ թէ
կրակ կայ:

If the timid sees a glow-worm, he shouts, "Fire!"

Անազնիւ, անվստահելի

Dishonest, untrustworthy

Դավէն փախնով կուլ կը տայ:

He could swallow a camel along with its saddle.

Շանը շապիկ կը հագցնէ, կատուին՝ վարտիք:

He could put a shirt on a dog and shorts on a cat.

Դատարկ գցում է, որ լիքը բռնի:

He throws it empty to catch it full.

Անկից հեռու եղողը, Աստծուն կը մօտենայ:

Whoever stays away from him, approaches God.

Բանուորի մանգաղ գողացող է:

He would steal a workman's sickle.

Նօթը գեղ մէկ իշու կը բառնայ:

He would load seven villages on one donkey.

Տղան մամուլ փորէն կը հանէ:

He would pull a child from its mother's belly.

Առանց խուկկի-մոմի ուխտատեղ կ'երթայ:

He would go on a pilgrimage with neither incense nor candle.

Մեռելը հողէն կը հանէ:

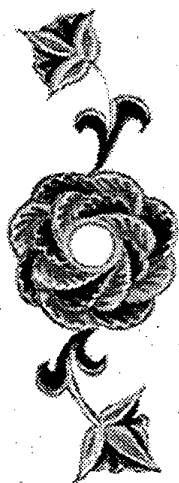
He would dig the dead out of the grave.

Քեզ աղբիւր կը տանի, ծախաւ յետ կը բերի:

He would take you to the spring and bring you back thirsty.

V

Մարդու բնութիւնը
Human Nature



THEMES

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Մարդ միշտ պատրուակ մը կը գտնէ
One always finds excuses

Արտը խախուտ, մահանան (չինծու պատճառ) կարկուտ:
The crop is of no use, the hail is an excuse.

Տունը խախուտ, մահանան կարկուտ:
The house decays, it's the hail, he says.

Բակը ծուռ է, կովը կաթ չի տա:
The barnyard is crooked, the cow has no milk.

Խլոտին ցուրտն է մահանա:
For a runny nose, the cold weather is an excuse.

Խլոտին հարցուցին. «Քիթդ ինչու՞ կը վազէ»
«Ձմեռ է» - ըսաւ:
«Քեզ ամառն ալ գիտենք, ձմեռն ալ»
They asked the runny nose, "Why is your nose running?"
"It's winter," he replied.
"We know you in the summer, as well as in the winter."

Կաքաւին ըսին. «Ինչու՞ ոտներդ կարմիր են»
«Ցուրտ է», - ըսաւ:
«Հա», ըսին, «մենք քեզի ամառն ալ տեսանք»
They asked the partridge, "Why are your feet so red?"
"Because of the cold," it replied.
"Well," they said, "we saw you in the summer too."

Ճպռոտ աչքին մուխը պատճառ:
For the sick eyes, smoke is an excuse.

Երեխէն մահանա, մէրը կշտանա:
The child is an excuse for the mother to have her fill.

Խախուտ մարդուն դարեհացը մահանա:
For the sickly person the barley bread is an excuse.

Կատուի դունչը մսին չհասաւ, ասաց. «Էսօր ուրբաթ է»
The cat could not get to the meat; it said, "Today is Friday."
[Friday is a day of fasting.]

Տղան մահանա, մարը քնանայ. տղան մահանա, մարը
 կշտանայ:
The child, an excuse for the mother to sleep; the child, an
excuse for the mother to eat.

Քուռին մութը մահանա:
For the blind, darkness is to blame.

Աղուէսի դունչը խաղողին չհասաւ, ասաց. «Խակ է»
The fox couldn't reach the grapes; it said, "They are green."

Մարդը հողեղէն է, երկնքէն չէ:
Humans are of earth, not of heaven.

Սխալիլը մարդկային է:
To err is human.

Մարդ կ'օգտուի յարմար առիթէն
People take advantage of opportunities

Գողը ի՞նչ է ուզում. մութ գիշեր:
What does a thief wish for? A dark night.

Գէլն ամպ օրը կ'ուրախանայ:
The wolf will rejoice on a cloudy day.

Գէլն ամպ օր կ'ուզի, գողը՝ մութ գիշեր:
The wolf longs for a cloudy day; the thief, for a dark night.

Մինչեւ ջուրը չաղտորուի, ձուկ չի բռնուի:
You cannot catch a fish before the water gets muddy.

Կատուն տունը չի, մկները պար կը խաղան:
The cat is away, the mice will dance and play.

Շները կռուեցին, անցորդի բանը յաջողուեց:
The dogs fought, the pedestrian got away.

Մարդիկ տարբեր են
People are different

Ամէն մարդ մէկ չի լինի:
All people are not alike.

Ամէն ծաղիկ իր հոտն ունի:
Every flower has its own scent.

Ամէն մարդ մէկ-մէկ խելքի կը ծառայէ:
Every person serves a particular brain.

Մարդ կայ տէրտէրն է սիրում, մարդ կայ՝ տէրտէրակիւնը:
Some like the priest, some like his wife.

Ամէն գլխէն մէկ-մէկ ձայն կ'ելլէ:
From every person's head a different voice is heard.

Ամէն մարդ իր գիտցածը կը խօսի:
Everybody says what he knows.

Մարդ կայ, որ իր աչքն ա սուր, մարդ կայ, մանգաղն ա
 կտուր:
Some have a sharp eye, others a sharp sickle.

Որը նալին կը զարնէ, որը՝ մեխին:
Some hit on the horseshoe, some on the nail.

Ամէն ծաղիկ իր տեսքն ունի. ամէն տարիք՝ իր պէտքն:
Every flower has its look; every age, its needs.

Ամէն մարդ աշխարհը իր սրտին պէս գիտէ:
Everybody judges others according to his own heart.

Մարդն ինքնուրոյն է
Man is autonomous

Ամէն մարդ իր գլխի տէրն է:
Everybody is the master of his own head.

Ամէն խորոզի ձայնը իր բունի մէջ բարձր կ'ելլէ:
Every rooster's voice is loudest in its own pen.

Ամէն զուլ իր կտուցով կ'ուտէ:
Every bird eats with its own beak.

Ամէն մարդ իր տունը, հաւերն ալ իրենց բունը:
Everybody in his den, and the hens in their pen.

Ամէն մարդ իրեն գլխարկը թող բռնէ, որ չընկնի:
Let everybody stop his own hat from falling.

Ամէն մարդու սրտին մէջ ասլան մը կայ պառկած:
In every heart, a lion sleeps.

Ամէն ոչխար իր դմակը կը կրէ:
Every sheep carries its own dmak.*

Մարդ առաջ իր մասին կը մտածէ
People put themselves first

Ամէն մարդ իր օգուտին ա վազում:
Everyone runs after his own profit.

Ամէն մարդ իր էջը կը քշէ:
Everyone drives his own donkey forward.

Ամէն մարդ իր Կարապետը կու լայ:
Everyone cries for his own Garabed [common male name].

Ամէն մարդ իր հաւան (եղանակ) կը չալէ:
Everyone plays his own tune.

Ամէն մարդ իր մեռելը կու լայ:
Everyone mourns his own dead.

Ո՞վ կ'ըսէ թէ թանս թթու է:
Who would call his own tan sour?*

Ամէն մարդու շապիկն իրան ջանին մօտիկ է:
Everyone's shirt is close to his body.

Ամէն մարդ իր մուշտին (բռունցք) քար կը կարծէ:
Everyone thinks his fist is made of stone.

Մարդ իր քաքին փի՛ֆ չ'ըսեր:
No one says "fie" to his own shit.

Մարդուս իրա արածը իր աչքին չի երեւայ:
One never notices his own wrong-doings.

Ամէն մարդ իր կորկոտը կ'աղայ:
Everyone grinds his own korkot.*

Ամէն մարդ իր ըրածին կը հաւնի:
Everyone likes what he is doing.

Ամէն մարդ իմ ալուրս ճերմակ է, կ'ասէ:
Everyone says, "My flour is white."

Ամէն մարդ իր խալկինին (կաթսայ) տակը փայտ կը դնէ:
Everyone adds wood under his own kettle.

Ամէն մարդ իրա գործը կը յառաջացնի:
Everyone moves his own affairs forward.

Ամէն մարդ իր կտաւը ներկելու ետեւ ա:
Everyone is after dyeing his own cloth.

Հէրքէս (ամէն մարդ) իրեն քերացած տեղը կը քերէ:
Everyone scratches where he itches.

Ամէն մարդ ջանում է իր ծառին ջուր տալ:
Everyone takes pains to water his own tree.

Ամէն մարդ իր տան առջեւը կ'աւլէ:
Everyone sweeps in front of his own house.

Ամէն մարդ ջուրը իր ջաղացքը կը կապէ:
Everyone channels the water to his own mill.

Մի օձ, որ ինձ չի կծի, թող հազար տարի ապրի:
Let the serpent that doesn't bite me live a thousand years.

Իմ չգնացած դրախտը, թող էջերն երթան:
Let the paradise that's not for me be for the donkeys.

Իմ մեռնելուց յետ, թող կտրի աղբիւր ու գետ:
After I die, may all rivers and wells run dry.

Քու ցաւը դուն գիտես
Your pain is yours

Ամէն մարդի տարտը իրան ցաւ կը տալ:
Everybody's worry causes pain to him alone.

Ամէն մարդի տարտը իրան համար տաւայ (ուղտ) է:
Everybody thinks his own troubles are as big as a camel.

Հազար կնիկ հաւաքուեն, ցաւը ծննդկանին ա:
Even with a thousand women around, it's the woman in labor who suffers the pain.

Կրակն ինկած տեղը կ'այրէ:
The fire will burn where it strikes.

Ցաւը քաշողը գիտէ:
It's the sufferer who feels the pain.

Սաղն ի՛նչ իմանայ, կաղն ի՛նչ ա:
How would he who walks straight know how it feels to limp?

Եարէն (վէրք) տիրոջը ցաւ կը տայ:
A wound gives pain to the wounded.

Եզին քաշածը մինակ իր կաշին գիտէ:
What an ox has to endure, only its hide knows.

Ուրիշի մեռելը ուրիշին քնած է թւում:
When the dead are not your own, they seem to be sleeping.

Նեղութեան մէջ մարդ կռուան կը փնտռէ
In trouble you look for a niche

Ծովն ընկնողը փրփուրին էլ ձեռ կը գցի:
He who falls into the sea will reach out even for the foam.

Ծովն ընկնողը ձեռքը օձին էլ կը գցի:
He who falls into the sea will reach out even for a snake.

Ջուրն ընկնողը չոփիցն ա բռնում:
He who falls into the water will reach out for a straw.

Մինչեւ ամպը չգողայ, Աստուած-Աստուած չեն կանչի:
No one calls God for help until he hears thunder.

Ոմանք օրհասի պահուն անխոհեմ կը վարուին
When their time is up, some behave irrationally

Շանը սատկելիքը որ գայ, կ'երթայ ճամուռ (մզկիթի) բակը կ'աղտոտէ:

If the dog is about to die, it goes and craps in the court-yard of the mosque.

Օձի օրհասը որ գայ, կը գնայ ճամբի մէջտեղը կը պառկի:
When its days are through, the snake lies in the middle of the road.

Շան կատաղելը իր գլխին կորուստ ա:
When a dog goes mad, it's for his own head.

Աստուած որ մէկի տունը քանդի, առաջ խելքը կ'առնի:
Before destroying your home, God takes away your mind.

Ուրիշի ունեցածը միշտ աւելի լաւ կը թուի
What others have seems to be better

Հեռուից լսուող տափի ձէնը դուր կը գայ:
The sound of clapping from afar sounds better.

Հարեւանի հաւը հարեւանի աչքին գէր կ'երեւայ:
The neighbor's hen looks fatter.

Հարեւանին հարսը հարեւանին սիրուն կ'երեւայ:
The neighbor's daughter-in-law seems prettier.

Ուրիշի կնիկը սիրուն կը լինի:
Someone else's wife is always prettier.

Ուրիշին տոպրակին վրայ գռալ չ'ըլլար:
Don't bray at somebody else's bag.

[Refers to a donkey-like appetite for another's belongings.]

**Մարդ պատասխանատու
է իր արարքներուն համար
People are responsible for their actions**

**Այծն իր վիզէն կը կախեն, ոչխարը իր ճիւղէն (ոտք):
They hang the goat from his neck, the sheep from his leg.**

**Ամէն մարդ իր փոսը կը լցնէ:
Everyone fills his own grave.**

**Ամէն մարդի իր պարանոցը կախ կը տան:
They hang a man with his own rope.**

**Ամէն մարդի պարտքը իրենից կ'ուզեն:
Everybody will be asked to pay his dues.**

**Մարդ ուրիշներուն ավելի օգտակար է քան իրեն
People are more useful to others than to themselves**

**Դարբինը դանակ չի ունենար:
A blacksmith will have no knife.**

**Կօշկակարին կօշիկ չի լինի:
A shoemaker will have no shoes.**

**Ջուլհակին պատանք չի լինի:
There will be no shroud for a weaver.**

**Դանակն իր կոթը չի տաչեր:
A knife cannot carve its handle.**

**Մոմն իր տակը չի լուսաւորի:
The candle does not cast light beneath itself.**

**Արեւ ես, ամա ուրիշին լուս կու տաս:
You are the Sun, but you give light to others.**

Մարդ իր սխալը չի տեսներ
People are blind to their faults

Տեւէն իր կողքը չի տեսնի:
A camel doesn't see its hump.

Քուռը չլին չի հաւնիր:
The blind man doesn't like the cross-eyed.

Էչն ինքն է, խոտն ուրիշի առաջը կը դնէ:
Being himself a donkey, he puts the hay in front of others.

Քոսին տնազ անողը (ծաղրողը) լաւ միրուք կ'ունենայ:
You must have a good beard yourself, before you can laugh at the beardless.

VI
Մարդկային վիճակներ
States of Being



THEMES

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Առողջ և հիւանդ
Healthy and sick

Սաղութիւն (առողջութիւն), սուլթանութիւն:
Health is wealth.

Հիւանդի աչքը դռանը կ'ըլնի:
A sick person's eyes are fixed on the door.

Մարդի ինչտեղը ցաւեց, հոգին էնտեղն ա:
Wherever it hurts, there is your soul.

Ուտեմ տենդիմ, չուտեմ տենդիմ. լաւ է ուտեմ տենդիմ:
Whether I eat or not, I'll have the fever; better I eat and have the fever.

Ո՛չ առողջ եմ քալելու, ո՛չ հիւանդ եմ պառկելու:
Neither healthy enough to walk nor ill enough to lie down.

Հիւանդն էն ա, որ չամիչը օխտը տեղից ա կծում:
A sick person bites from a raisin seven times.

Ցաւն ականջ ունի:
Sickness has ears.
[Superstition: One should not speak of sickness or it will come.]

Հիւանդը չէ հիւանդ, հիւանդի տէրն է հիւանդ:
It's not the sick person who is sick, it's his caretaker.

Ցաւը կը դայ վազէ-վազ, դուրս կը գնայ նազէ-նազ:
Sickness comes rapidly and leaves graciously.

Օրը մթնանայ, ցաւը չառանայ:
As the day grows darker, the pain grows stronger.

Տնքալը որ չըլնի, հիւանդը հիւանդ չէ:
If it weren't for the sighing, a sick person wouldn't be sick.

Հիւանդութիւնը դանակ-դանակ կու գայ ու դմակ-դմակ
կ'երթայ:

Sickness comes like a knife and leaves like a dmak.*
[i.e., Sickness has an acute start but a sluggish ending.]

Յաւին աղէկը չ'ըլլար:
There is no such thing as a good sickness.

Լաւ է հիւանդ լինես, քան թէ հիւանդ պահես:
It's better to be sick than to care for the sick.

Երեխայիս հիւանդութիւնը հոգս չէ. յետոյ բնութիւնը
փոխելն է հոգս:
*I do not worry about the sickness of my child; I worry about
the change of his character thereafter.*

Կաղ կաց, սաղ կաց:
Keep limping, but stay alive.
[i.e., It's better to be crippled than dead.]

Գլուխդ որ ցաւեց, սաղ ջանդ (մարմինդ) կը ցաւի:
When your head aches, your whole body aches.

Առողջ մնալու խորհուրդներ *Advice for good health*

Յրտից վախեցիր, որ ցաւ չտեսնես:
Keep away from the cold, so you won't suffer pain.

Կեռասն ասել է, զիս շատ ուտողը իմ պոչից բարակ կ'ըլնի:
*The cherry said, "He who eats a lot of me will be slim like my
stem."*

Տղան ջուրը կը մեծնայ, ձուկը՝ ծովը:
A child grows in the water, a fish in the sea.
[Advice to wash a child regularly.]

Գլուխդ պաղ պահէ, ոտքերդ տաք:
Keep your head cool, your feet warm.

Ամէն բանին բարակը կը կտրուի, մարդու՝ հաստը:
Everything breaks when thin, only humans when thick.

Գլուխդ պաղ, փորդ թոյլ, ոտքդ տաք պահեցիր, հէքիմ
(բժիշկ) եղար, գնացիր:
If you keep your head cool, your stool loose, and your feet warm, you are your best doctor.

Հանճի նստած տեղը աղույտ (թունավոր) կ'ըլնի:
Where flies sit, there will be germs.

Ափ մը ջուր, ափ մը լոյս:
A splash of water is a flash of light.
[Cold water is beneficial for the eyes.]

Միրան մին կեր, խնձոր երկու, սալոր՝ քանի փորդ տանի:
Eat one apricot, two apples; but of prunes, as many as you can take.

Յուրտը տարած տեղը կրակին չեն անի:
Keep what is frostbitten away from the fire.

Յուրտը տարած տեղը ձիւնով ետ կու գայ:
They cure frostbite with snow.

Շան կծածը շան մազով կը բուժեն:
They cure the dog's bite with the dog's hair.

Փորձանքի մէջ *In peril*

Փորձանքը խապար չի անի:
Disaster gives no warning.

Փորձանքը գալու ըլլայ նէ, տունը նստած տեղն ալ կու
գալ:

If disaster is on its way, it will come even while you sit at home.

Փորձանքի կէս ճամբիցը դառնալը խելօքութիւն ա:

If you are half way to ruin, it is wise to return.

Որոշ պայմաններ նախընտրելի են

Some conditions are preferable

Լաւ ա գեղի կատուն, մինչ (քան) դրսի խաթուն:

It's better to be the village cat, than a foreign aristocrat.

Լաւ է սարին տակն ամաչել, քանց սարին գլուխը:

*It's better to be ashamed at the foot of the mountain than on
its top.*

Լաւ է ճանճի գլուխ լինել, քանց առիւծի պոչ:

It's better to be the head of a fly, than the tail of a lion.

Լաւ ա շիւղի (շիւ) լինես, քան թէ քու:

It's better to be cross-eyed than blind.

Լաւ ա ոտս նեղանայ քանց սիրտս:

It's better my feet get into trouble, than my heart.

Կոյր

Blind

Քոռն ի՞նչ կ'ուզի, երկու աչք:

What do the blind wish for? Two eyes.

Քոռին (կոյր) համար գիշերն ալ մէկ է, ցերեկն ալ:

For the blind, night or day, it's all the same.

Կոյր մարդուն աչքին աշխարհքը մութ կ'երեւայ:
For the blind, the world seems dark.

Քոռին ի՛նչ պէտք է թէ ճրագը թանկ է:
What does it matter to a blind man if the candle is expensive?

**Ուրախ և տխուր
Happy and unhappy**

Լացը լաց կը բերէ, ծիծաղը՝ ծիծաղ:
Tears bring tears, laughter brings laughter.

Լացն ու ծիծաղը աղբէր են:
Tears and laughter are twins.

Տարտ անողին տարտ չի պակսի:
Those who worry will never be short of worries.

Տարտ անողին տարտ չի պակսի, քէֆ անողին քէֆ չի
պակսի:
*Those who worry will never be short of worries, those who
rejoice will never be short of joy.*

Մինչեւ տարտ չտեսնիս, ուրախութիւն չես տեսնի:
You won't see joy before you have felt pain.

Շատ որ ուրախանաս, գնա՛ գերեզմանները. չատ որ
տրտմիս, էլի՛ գնա գերեզմանները:
*If you are overly happy, go to the cemetery; if you are overly
sad, still go to the cemetery.*

Մեծ տարտին մեծ խելք է պէտք:
A great grief needs a great mind.

Մինչեւ մարդի հոգին չցաւի, աչքերը չեն լացի:
The eyes won't cry before the heart [lit.: soul] gets hurt.

Ջուրը դուրսը կը մաքրէ, արտասուքը՝ ներսը:
Water cleans you from the outside, tears from within.

Քառսուն տարի ա՛խ չըլլար:
There cannot be forty years of sighing.
[i.e., No sorrow is endless.]

Ցաւ, հոգ
Pain, worry

Ամէն մարդ ցաւ մ'ունի:
Everybody has a sorrow.

Ցաւը իսանին (մարդ) է, չէ թէ սար ու քարին:
Pain is for humans, not for mountains and rocks.

Ցաւը իսանը (մարդ) կը քաշի:
Only humans can bear pain.

Ցաւը մարդի ցեցն ա, ջանը կ'ուտի:
Worry is like a moth; it eats up one's heart.

Շատ տարտի տէր, շատ կը խօսայ:
He who has many worries talks too much.

Շատատարտ, շատաղրոյց:
Much worry, much talking.

Տարտ կայ, կու դայ կ'անցնի, տարտ կայ, կ'այրէ կ'անցնի:
Some troubles come and go; others burn you, then they go.

Մի տարտը մարդ չի սպանի:
One worry alone won't kill you.

Ամէն մարդ իրա տարտը կ'ասի:
Everybody talks about his own worries.

Ցաւը լեռներին են տուել, չեն դիմացել, առել մարդուն են տուել:

When struck by grief, the mountains couldn't bear it, so they gave it to humans.

Ցաւը քաշողը գիտէ:

He who has suffered pain knows pain.

Ցաւը ուրացեր է հաւատը:

Pain can renounce faith.

Մատը կտրողը կսկիծը գիտէ:

He who has cut his finger knows the pain.

Ցաւը քաշողին կու տայ Աստուած:

God gives pain to those who can take it.

Մահ

Death

Քնածն ու մեռածը, տիփ մէկ է:

Asleep or dead, it's all the same.

Սատանէն մեռլից փախ ա:

(Even) the devil dreads the dead.

Մահէն վախցողին ապրածն ալ մեռածի հաւասար է:

If you fear death, being alive is equal to being dead.

Ահը չատ ա քանց թէ մահը:

Fear is worse than death.

Անճար ցաւի դեղը գերեզմանն ա, անճար հիւանդի բժիշկը՝ մահը:

The grave is the medicine for the incurable pain; death is the doctor for the incurable man.

Շատ ապրել կայ, ուչ մեռնել կայ:

There is such a thing as living long, there is such a thing as dying late.

Քիչիկ ցաւիկ, անուշ մահիկ:

The shorter the pain, the sweeter the death.

Հիւանդացաւ, չմեռաւ. կրկնեց, մեռաւ:

He got sick, he survived; he relapsed, and he died.

Մահը ահ կու տայ, ահն ալ մահ կու տայ:

Death causes fear, fear causes death.

Հոգը ցաւ կը բերէ, ցաւը՝ մահ:

Worry brings sickness, sickness brings death.

Մահը մարդի ականջի ետեւին ա:

Death is behind your ear.

[i.e., Death is close.]

Մահը տեսածին պէս, ջերմին գոհ կ'ըլլայ:

At the sight of death, man tolerates fever.

Մահը մի օր, լացը մի օր:

Death in one day, tears in one day.

[i.e., Grief and sorrow do not last long.]

Մեռնողի ետեւէն մէկը չէ մեռեր:

Nobody died after someone close died.

Այսօրուայ մահը այսօր կու լան:

Today's death is mourned today.

Մահը մեծ ու պզտիկ չի հարցնում:

Death doesn't ask if you're old or young.

Մեռնողի վրայ տէրը կու լայ, տէրտէրը կ'ուրախանայ:

Death makes the mourner cry, and the priest laugh.

Մարդ իր մեռնելու օրի վրայ չպիտի խօսի:
One should not talk about the day of his death.

Միտքը երկար, կեանքը կարճ:
The mind is long, life is short.

Տղին մեռնելէն մի՛ վախենա, խանկրելէն վախեցի:
Don't dread a child's death; dread its paleness.
[i.e., It is better for a child to die, than to be sickly.]

Ինքնասպանի համար դատաստան չկայ:
There is no trial for someone who commits suicide.

Ինչ ծնում է, մեռնում էլ է:
What is born, shall also die.

Գետինէն ելել է, գետինը կ'երթայ:
He came from earth, he will go to earth.

Մահէն անդին գեղ չկայ:
There is no village after death.
[i.e., There is no afterlife.]

Էն կեանքեմէն ոչ ոք խապար չի բերել:
Nobody has ever brought news from the next life.

**Գինով, ծարաւ
Drunk, thirsty**

Գինի խմողը մէկ կը հարբի, խմացընողը՝ հազար:
He who drinks wine gets drunk once; he who makes others
drink, a thousand times.

Ես խմեցի, դուն հարբար:
I drank, you got drunk.

Նիսիա (ձրի) գինի խմողը երկու անգամ կը հարբի:
He who drinks free wine gets twice as drunk.

Ջուրն անուշ է, քանց նռան գինին:
Water is better than pomegranate wine.

Աշնան գինին, գարնան ջուրը:
The wine in fall and the water in spring (are the best).

Ջրի օգուտն էլ շատ ա, վնասն էլ:
Water can do both good and bad.

Գինի, խմէ՛ ու քնի՛:
Drink the wine and sleep fine.

Գինու մի թասը դեղ, մնացածին՝ տեղ:
One glass of wine is okay; from more than that, stay away.

Խմի՛չքին մէկը լաւ է, երկուսն բաւ է, երեքը՝ ցաւ է:
One drink can cure you, two can cheer you, three can kill you.

Գինի, կաթ է ծերոց:
Wine is the milk of the elderly.

Մի՛ խմեր քանի մը հատիկ, որ չըլլաս խախք ու խայտիկ:
Don't drink one after another so you don't become a bother.

Գինին անուշ-անուշ կը խմուի, լեղի-լեղի դուրս կ'ելլէ:
When wine goes in, it's sweet; when it comes out, it's bitter.

Գինին մարդու չի մեռցնի, համա շան օրը կը գցի:
Wine will not kill you, but it will make a fool of you.

Խմելուց, հա՛յ-հա՛յ, հաշուումը, վա՛յ-վա՛յ:
When you drink, you enjoy; when you pay, oh boy!

Գինովը իր էա հարը կը լացնէ, էա մարը:
A drunk makes either his father or his mother cry.

Գինովին ձեռք մի զարնէք, ան ինքնիրեն վար կ'ընկնի:
Don't push a drunk; he will fall by himself.

Այծին գինի են տուել, գնացել գայլի հետ կռիւ է արել:
They gave the goat wine, it went to fight the wolf.

Գինիին հարցուցին. «Աւրածդ չատ է, թէ շինածդ:» Ասաց.
 «Շինածս չգիտեմ, աւրածս համրանք չունի:»
They asked the wine, "Have you built more or destroyed more?" It said, "I do not know of building; of destroying I know a lot.

Հարբելու վերջը փոշմանութիւն է:
Drinking ends in regret.

Փունջը մունջին պիւլպիւլ (լեզուանի) կ'ընէ:
The punch puts words in the mute's mouth.

Գինին ներս կը մտնէ, սրռը (գաղտնիքը) դուրս կ'ելլէ:
The wine goes in, the secret comes out.

Հարբածին խելօք խօսքն ալ օդը կը ցնդի:
Even the wise words of a drunkard fade with the wind.

Խենդը գինովէն վախցեր է:
The fool fears the drunkard.

Գինովին եա լացը կու գայ, եա շեռը:
The drunkard is either about to cry or to pee.

Անօթի, կուշտ
Hungry, full

Խօսքը քամին տանոււմ է, կերածը մնոււմ է:
What is spoken the wind will carry away; what is eaten will stay.

Անօթութիւն - անամօթութիւն:
Starvation - humiliation.

Վիրաւոր մարդուն քուն կու գայ, անօթի եղողին չի գայ:
A wounded man can fall asleep, a hungry man cannot.

Օձի կծածը կը քնի, սովածը չի քնի:
If bitten by a snake, you will fall asleep; if hungry, you won't.

Քաղցած ոչ ոք չի մեռեր:
Hunger hasn't killed anybody yet.

Տարտլին շատ կը խօսէ, քաղցածը շատ կ'ուտէ:
The worried talks a lot, the hungry eats a lot.

Կուշտը սովածի հալից չի հասկանայ:
The well-fed doesn't know how the hungry feels.

Կուշտը անօթուն մանր կը բրդէ:
The well-fed cuts tiny pieces for the hungry.

Աւելի պատառ փոր չէ ծակում:
One more bite won't pierce the stomach.

(Անօթի) հաւը երազը կորեկ է տեսեր:
The (hungry) hen dreams of millet.

Անձրեւ օրը հաւերուն ջուր տուող շատ կայ:
On a rainy day, many will give water to the chickens.

Անօթի մարդը քարէն կակուղը կ'ուտէ:
The hungry will eat anything softer than stone.

Անօթի մարդուն հացը դաթայ կերեւայ:
For the hungry, bread seems like gata*.

Շոր տուր շնորհքի դամ, հաց տուր ուժի դամ:
Dress me up, I will look smart; feed me full, I will get strong.

Ճաշ տեսաւ, քամանչան մոռցաւ:
He saw food; he forgot his kamancha.*

Մարդիս իշտահը (ախորժակ) ատամի տակին ա:
Appetite is under the teeth.

Մարդ իր ակռաներով կը փորէ իր գերեզմանը:
You dig your grave with your teeth.

Բանը ծնունդը չի, բանը սնունդն ա:
It's the feeding, not the breeding.
 [i.e., Good nutrition is more important than genetic disposition.]

Շաքարն անուշ է, ամա հացին տեղը չի բռներ:
Sugar is sweet, but it can't replace bread.

Պատէն ընկնողը չի մեռնի, հացէն ընկնողը կը մեռնի:
Falling from a wall won't kill you, falling short of bread will.

Հոտած ըլնի, հատած չըլնի:
Better rotten than all gone. [About food.]

Հացիկ-ջրիկ, կեանք երջանիկ:
Bread and water, happy life.

Ապուր կեր, դուռը ել, փիլաւ կեր, լեռը եր:
Eat soup, go as far as the door sill; eat pilaf, go up the hill.*
 [i.e., For strenuous labor one needs more than a light soup.]

Պաղ ապուր, շան կերակուր:
Cold soup, dog's food.

Հացը սուլթան, ջուրը վեզիր, մնացածը գրգիր-մըղիր:
Bread is a Sultan, water a Vezir*, the rest doesn't matter.*

Ուր կայ հաց ու թան, սուտ է ամէն բան:
Where there is bread and tan, nothing else matters.*

Խաշիլը մինչեւ դուռը, խաշը մինչեւ քոլը (անտառը):
The khashil takes you as far as the door, the khash* as far as the wood.*

Հաց ու թան ունես, ամէն բան ունես:
If you have bread and tan, you have everything.*

Հաց մարդահան, հաց մարդակորուս:
Bread can repair you, bread can impair you.

Տաք հացին հոտը դրախտ է հասեր:
The smell of fresh bread has risen to paradise.

Ապուրը ապրանք, հացը պարծանք:
Soup is alright, but bread is the pride.

Հացը տան պակաս-պռատը կը դղի (հարթէր):
Bread fixes all the shortcomings in a house.

Գիշերուայ կերածը կորած է:
What was eaten at night is wasted.

Իրիկուայ արածը գտած ա, կերածը՝ կորած:
What is done in the evening is won, what is eaten is wasted.

Իշու փորը մանիշակով չի լցուի:
You cannot fill the donkey's belly with violets.

Կուշտ ուտելը Զատիկի իրիկունն է:
It's on Easter's eve that you eat your fill.
 [On Easter's eve, fasting ends and feasting begins.]

Շունն էլ ուտելիս ձենը կը կտրէ:
Even the dog is silent when it eats.

Կերածդ ի վոռչ (անիւղ ջրապուր), գլուխդ ի պոչ (պարապ):
What you eat is soup and bread; what you have, is an empty head.

Գարնան դառն է գոլական, աշնան՝ հաւը:
In spring, (you should eat) the lamb; in fall, the chicken.

Վախեցած
Afraid

Աչքը տեսածէն կը վախենայ:
Eyes fear what they have seen.

Սէւ օձի կծածը սէւ պարանից կը վախենայ:
He who was bitten by a black snake will fear a black rope.

Կաթից բերանը հրուել է, մածունը փչելով է ուտում:
If you've burned your mouth on milk, you will blow on yogurt.

Գայլի ահիցն գեղ չչինե՞նք:
Out of fear of the wolf, we shouldn't build the village?

Կատուն մկան միշտ գէշ երազ կը տեսցնէ:
The cat causes nightmares for the mouse.

Ահը հըը վազուկ կ'ընէ:
Fear makes the ass run.

Աղուէսը փուչին վրայ մէյմը կը նստի:
The fox sits but once on the thorns.

Ամօթահար
Embarrassed

Ռազիլ (ամօթահար) լինելուց, մեռնելը լաւ է:
Death is better than disgrace.

Թքելը մի ամօթ է, լիզելը՝ երկու:
Spitting is one shame, licking it back twice the shame.

Գեղեցիկ, տղեղ
Beautiful, homely

Տանը կատուն էլ լաւ է, որ սիրուն ըլի:
In a home even the cat should be pretty.

Խորոտը որ փողոցը քալէ, գետինը կը թնդայ:
When the beauty walks on the street, the ground thunders beneath her feet.

Արեւուն կ'ըսէ, դու մի՛ դուրս գայ, էս եմ՝ դուրս գալու:
She (the beautiful woman) says to the sun, "Don't rise, I will."
[In Armenian folk belief, the sun is a symbol of beauty.]

Լուսնկան պատուեր, մէջէն ելեր է:
It is as if the moon unfolded and she emerged.

Ալ էլ հագնի կը սագի, չալ էլ հագնի կը սագի:
Be it purple or be it wool, both suit her well.

Մի հատ շարժեմ, աշխարհք արժեմ:
Once I move forward, I'm worth the whole world.

Աղջկայ մի սպիտակութիւնը օխտը (եօթը) այլաւ (ամօթ) կը պարտկէ:
The whiteness of a woman's skin covers up seven sins.
[Stereotype: white skin is beautiful.]

Սեւ ու դեղին, ով որ տեսնի, պատուի լեղին:
Black and yellow (her face); he who sees her will be frightened to death.

["Black and yellow" is a pejorative epithet for swarthinness;
«պատուի լեղին» "the bile bursts" as a result of extreme fright.]

Սիրունի երեսին փիլաւ չեն ուտում:
You cannot eat pilaf on a beautiful face.*
[i.e., Beauty cannot replace material goods.]

Սպիտակի տեսքը, սեւի համր:
The looks of the white and the flavor of the black (woman).

Հաւը թող չիրքին ըլլայ, տէ (միայն) հաւկիթ ածէ:
Let the hen be ugly, as long as she lays eggs.

Երեսին աչողը կը կշտանայ:
If you look at her, you'll have your fill.

Երեսին ձուածեղ եփեն, չի ուտուի:
If you would cook an omelette on her face, you couldn't eat it.

Մազն ու միսը կու գան ու կ'երթան:
Hair and flesh come and go.

Գիշու (տգեղ) հացը կեր, խորոտկի (գեղեցիկ) ծոցը պառկի:
Eat the food of the homely woman, but sleep with the beautiful.

Երեսը սրտին հայելին է:
The face is the mirror of the heart.

Այնպէս գեղեցիկ է, որ մութ պատերուն լոյս կու տայ:
She is so pretty that she sheds light on dark walls.

Արեւը որ ելնի, աստղերը կը խաւարեն:
When the sun rises, the stars fade.
 [i.e., Next to the beautiful, the plain pale.]

Աղուորը սիրուն է, գէշը տիրուն է:
The beautiful you caress, the ugly you possess.

Երկարահասակ և կարճահասակ
Tall and short

Պոյը լման, խելքը մկան:
The height of a house, the mind of a mouse.

Պոյը երկար, խելքը կարճ:

His stature is tall, his brain is small.

Մարդու խելքը գլխու մէջ կ'ընի, ոչ թէ պոյի:

The brain is in one's head, not in one's height.

Բարդին էլ ա չատ բոյով, ի՛նչ անես, որ բար (պտուղ)
չունի:

What use is a tall poplar, if it bears no fruit.

Պոյին եմ մտիկ անում, խելքս ա գնում, խելքին եմ մտիկ
անում, զահլէս ա գնում:

*When I look at his height, I lose my mind; when I look at his
mind, I lose my delight.*

Երկանը կը խընդայ պոյին, կարճը՝ կտորին:

*The tall man is happy about his size; the short man is happy
about the fabric he buys.*

[The short man saves money on the fabric for his clothing.]

Խաբուսիկ արտաքին

Deceptive appearance

Ամէն պսպղացող ոսկի չի:

All that glitters is not gold.

Մազերի սպիտակութեանը որ նայես, սազն էլ ա սպիտակ:

*If you judged (wisdom) by white hair, you would revere the
goose as well.*

Ամէն սեւ հագնող տէրտէր չէ:

Not all who wear black are priests.

Սեւը ներս, ճերմակը դուրս:

The black inside, the white outside.

[i.e., Bad feelings are to be hidden.]

Ամէն հատիկ մարգարիտ չէ:
Every grain is not a pearl.

Գդակը մեծ, տակը դատարկ:
Big hat, empty head underneath.

Խոշոր աչքեր լոյս չկայ, գեր-գեր թեւեր ուժ չկայ:
Big eyes and no sight, thick arms and no might.

Անունը կայ, ամանումը չկայ:
The name on display, but nothing on the tray.

Թուփն աղէկ, պտուղ չկայ:
The bush looks good, but bears no fruit.

Աւեր քաղաքին, չէն անուն:
A ruined city, though the name is pretty.

Սէւ սիրտ, սպիտակ ատամ:
Black heart, white teeth.

Ծուխը չատ, խորովածը քիչ:
There's smoke high up, but little kebob*.

Հաջան շունը մարդ չի կծի:
A barking dog doesn't bite.

Սէւ հաւը ճերմակ հաւկիթ կ'ածէ:
A black hen lays a white egg.

Ամպի գոռալու կէօրայ, անձրեւ չի գայ:
The rain that falls won't match the thunder that rolls.

Ամէն ամպ անձրեւ չի բերի:
Not every cloud brings rain.

Հեղ ձիու կիցը սաստիկ կ'ըլլայ:
The kick of a quiet horse is the strongest.

Մեծ քար վերցնողը զարկելու նպատակ չունի:
He who picks up a big stone won't strike.

Մուռնջ կատուն շատ մուկ կը բռնէ, քանց խօսունը:
A silent cat catches more mice than a loud one.

Շունը կաղալով չի սատկի:
A dog won't die from limping.

Դրսից պսպղայ շորս, սովից դողռայ փորս:
Outside my dress sparkles, inside my stomach rumbles.

Ամէն կլոր խնձոր չի:
Not everything round is an apple.

Ներսը ինձ ա վառում, դուրսը՝ ուրիշին:
Inside you depress me, outside you impress others.

Օձի սէւն էլ անիծուի, սպիտակն էլ:
Damned is the snake, whether white or black.

Կաթողիկէն մենծ, զօրութիւնը փոքր:
The cathedral is tall, its power is small.

Տուն պոփլոզիկ (փառաւոր), մէջը տկլոզիկ (մերկ):
A dazzling exterior, an empty interior.

Շորերս հին ա, խօսքս անգին ա:
My clothes are old, my words are gold [lit.: priceless].

Ձուկը ջրին մէջ մեծ կ'երեւնայ:
A fish looks bigger in the water.

Գդակս թօղոտ տեսար, ջաղացպա՞ն կարծեցիր:
You saw my dusty hat, and you thought I was a miller?

Էչն էն էչն ա, փալանն ա փոխած:
The donkey is the same, only the saddle has changed.

Հեռուանց էլի (օտար) աչքն ա հանում, մօտըկանց՝
տիրոջը:

From afar you strike the stranger, from close-by your owner.

Կոչումը կայ, միջումը չկայ:
The title is there, but inside it's bare.

Հագուստ Clothes

Շորն ասաց. «Դու ինձ պահի պողջամիջին, ես քեզ պահեմ
մարդամիջին:»

The clothes said, "You keep us in the bundle, we keep you in the crowd."

Մարդին մարդ չինողը շորն է:
Clothes make the man.

Էչը փալանով, մարդը հալաւով (հագուստ):
Donkeys (are judged) by their saddles, humans by their clothes.

Փողը մարդուն խելք կը բերի, շորը մարդուն քելք
(քայլուածք) կը բերի:
Money gives you brains, clothes make you walk with airs.

Ծալած շորը ինքն իրան կը մաշի:
Folded clothes wear out by themselves.

Լէնին ճար կայ, նեղին՝ ճար չկայ:
For the wide (clothing) there is a cure, for the narrow, there is
none.

Մարդուս կարողութիւնը հագուստովը կ'իմացուի:
Clothes show the wealth of the person.

Որքան աղքատնաս, չախա (ճոխ) հագիր:
However penniless, dress well.

VII

Հաւատք և սնոտիւսպաշտութիւն *Beliefs and Superstitions*



THEMES

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Աստուծոյ մասին
About God

Աստուծու պահած գառը գէլը չի ուտի:
A wolf won't eat a lamb guarded by God.

**Աստուծոյ աչքը որ քաղցր լինի, մատաղի գառն իր
հարքով կու գայ դուռդ:**
*If you are favored by God, the sacrificial lamb will come by
itself to your door.*

Աստուած ամէն շնորհք մի մարդու չի տար:
God does not bestow one person with all talents.

Քոռ հաւքի բունը Աստուած կը չինէ:
The blind bird's nest is built by God.

Աստուած որ տայ, չի հարցնի ում տղէն ես:
When God gives, he does not ask whose child you are.

**Աստուած եղէ մոմ վառողին, եղէ մոմ կու տայ, մեղրէ մոմ
վառողին՝ մեղրէ մոմ:**
*God gives oil-candles to those who burn oil-candles, and
wax-candles to those who burn wax-candles.*

**Աստուած փլաւ ուտողին փլաւ կու տայ, ժածիկ ուտողին
ժածիկ:**
God gives pilaf to those who eat pilaf, and zhazhik* to those
who eat zhazhik.*

Աստուած մատ չունի, որ աչքդ խոթէ:
God has no finger to pluck out your eye.
[i.e., God has his own godly ways of punishing.]

Քրիստոսին աչքով չտեսան, սրտով ճանչցան:
*They didn't see Christ with their eyes, they recognized him in
their hearts.*

Մարդ մարդի երեսին կը նայի, Աստուած՝ սրտին:
Man looks to man's face, God to man's heart.

Մարդ մարդի խօսքին մտիկ կը տայ, Աստուած՝ սրտին:
Man listens to man's words, God to man's heart.

Աստուած տարտ տուեր, դարման ալ տուեր է:
Along with grief, God gives us relief.

Տուն շինողին, աղջիկ կարգողին, Աստուած հետը կ'ըլլայ:
God stands by those who build a house, or marry off a daughter.

Սատանի շինածը Աստուած կը քանդէ:
What the devil built, God will destroy.

Խորհուրդ մարդկանց, կամքն Աստուծոյ:
Man proposes, God disposes.

Յաջողէ Տէրը, պսակէ տէրտէրը:
If the Lord allows, the priest will bless the vows.

Ճամբորդի գնալն իր ձեռն է, դառնալն՝ Աստծու:
Leaving is up to the traveller, returning is up to God.

Թէ Աստուած չօգնէ, վիզ ծռելը գուր բան է:
Without God's backing, it's pointless to bend your back.

Աստուած էլ լաւին է տանում:
Even God takes the best.

Աստուած ողորմած է ըսողը, անօթի կը մնայ:
He who leaves it in the hands of God, will starve.
[Lit.: He who says, "God is merciful," will starve.]

Լաւ է մէկ անգամ Աստծուն խնդրել, քան քառասուն անգամ քառասուն սրբի:
It's better to beg God once, than forty saints forty times.

Թագաւորը հեռու է, Աստուած բարձր:
The King is far, the Lord is high.

**Ա՛խ Աստուած, մէկին կու տաս սէլով փէտ, որին չես տայ
ցախ, Աստուած:**

*O Lord, to some you give a cart of wood, to others not even
brushwood.*

Աստուած արդարը կը վարձատրէ
God rewards the honest

Աստուած հալալին կու տայ:
God rewards the just.

Հարամ ուտողի մինն երկու չի լինի:
What is dishonestly earned will not augment.

Խունկն ու մոմը իր սրբավայրը կը գտնի:
The incense and candle will find their shrine.

**Հալալը (արդար), որ մազ դառնայ չի կտրուի. հարամը
(անարդար), որ գերան դառնայ, կը կտրուի:**

*What was earned honestly won't break, even if it gets as thin
as a hair; What was earned dishonestly will break, even if it grows as
thick as a beam.*

Հալալ մալը գէլը չի տանի:
The wolf won't take what is honestly earned.

Հարամ վաստակը բոռան (մրրիկ) կը տանի:
Dishonest earnings will be carried away by the storm.

Հարամը կու գայ, հալալն էլ կը տանի:
*Dishonest earnings will carry away the honest earnings as
well.*

Դառը քրտինքի բերած կոպեկը ուղտի պոչ է, չի երկարի:
A penny earned with bitter sweat is like a camel's tail: it never
grows.

Հոգի, հաւատ, հանդերձեալ կեանք
The soul, the faith, and the hereafter

Հոգին անուշ է, քանց մարմինը:
The soul is sweeter than the body.

Լաւ է մարմնաւոր աղքատ, քան հոգեւոր:
Better to be poor in goods than in spirit.

Դատաստան կայ գալու, պատասխան կայ տալու:
On Judgment Day, you will be made to pay.

Արդարն ու մեղաւորը դատաստանին յայտնի կ'ըլնի:
Just or unjust, it will be known on Judgment day.

Առաջ կեր, յետոյ գոհացիր:
First eat, then give thanks.

Հաւատք ունիս, չատ կ'ապրիս:
If you have faith, you'll live long.

Հաւատքն իրմէ պէտք ա, վրան քսածը հաւատք չէ:
Faith must come from within, what is spread on is not faith.

Խնկով մոմով արքայութիւն գնալ չի լինի:
You cannot get to paradise just by burning incense and
candles.

Աշխարհքը լուսամուտ ա. ամէն եկող մտիկ կը տայ ու
կ'երթայ:
The world is a window: every newcomer looks out and then
departs.

Աշխարհքը ոչ ոքի չի մնացել:
Nobody could keep this world for himself.

Աշխարհքս Սողոմոն իմաստունին էլ չի մնացել:
Even Solomon the Wise could not keep this world for himself.

Աշխարհի մալը աշխարհ կը մնայ:
The wealth of this world will stay in this world.

Դժոխքն էլ, դրախտն էլ, էս աշխարհումն է:
Both heaven and hell are in this world.

Էն կեանքեմէն ոչ ոք խապար չի բերել:
Nobody has ever brought news from the next world.

Ըրածդ պիտի հատուցուի
Your actions will be rewarded

Ցանողը կը քաղէ:
He who sows will reap.

Ցանածդ կը քաղես:
You will reap what you have sown.

Ինչ որ ցանես, էն էլ կը հնձես:
What you sow is what you reap.

Ինչ որ ասես, էն կը լսես:
What you say is what you hear.

Կարասի մէջ ինչ ձէն տաս, էն կը լսես:
Whatever you shout into the barrel, you will hear back.

Ով կիրակնամուտ չպահի, մէջ դժոխքի կրակին մաշի:
He who does not keep Sunday's eve, in the fires of hell is destined to grieve.

Ուրիշին հոր փորողը, ինքը կ'ընկնի մէջը:
He who digs a pit for someone else will fall in it himself.

Խածան չան ակռաները կը քակեն:
They pull out the teeth of a biting dog.

Տուն քանդողին տուն չի լինի:
He who destroys someone's home will never have one.

Տուն ակերողին, տուն չի մնայ:
He who destroys someone's home loses his own.

Տուն քանդողի տունը Աստուած կը քանդէ:
God destroys the home of those who destroy the home of others.

Խանչալը երերողը խանչալով կը գնայ:
He who swings the dagger, will die by the dagger.

Քամու դէմ թքողը, իրա երեսին կը թքի:
He who spits towards the wind, spits in his own face.

Ով ինչ անի, իրան կ'անի:
Whatever you do, you do to yourself.

Հարեւանիդ ուզի մի կով, որ Աստուած տայ երկու կով:
Wish one cow for your neighbor, so God gives you two.

Դռուը տփողի դռուը կը տփեն:
They pound at the door of those who pound at the door of others.

Անողաց, գտնողաց:
You do it, you get it.

Ասեղ խեթողը, մախաթ կը ստանայ:
He who pierces with a needle, will be pierced with a packing-needle.

Զար ուզողին, Աստուած չար կու տայ:
God gives evil to those who wish evil to others.

Շնութեան գնացողը շնաթակ կ'ուտի:
He who turns to doggery will be beaten like a dog.

Փչածդ գդալդ տի գայ:
What you blow on will come back to your own spoon.

Պատուէ՛, որ պատուուիս:
Honor to be honored.

Արիւն թափողը արիւնով ալ կ'երթայ:
He who causes bloodshed will perish in blood.

Արիւն խմողը արիւնջուայ կը դառնայ:
He who drinks blood, will be washed in blood.

Աջով տուր, որ ձախով առնես:
Give with your right to receive with your left.

Ուրիշին մասխարա գցողը, իրեն գլխին կը կատարի:
He who mocks others brings mockery upon himself.

Սիրէ ինձ, սիրեմ քեզ:
Love me, and I will love you.

Անողին չի մնայ:
He who commits (evil) will not go unpunished.

Աչքդ հանողի հոգին հանէ:
Pull out the soul of those who pull out your eye.

Ողորմողին ուրիշը կ'ողորմի:
He who shows pity to others will be shown pity in return.

Ամէն մարդու արածը դէմը կու գայ:
What you do to others will come back to you.

Հարամ հաց ուտողը երկար չի ապրի:
He who eats unearned bread will not live long.

Մարդասպանի թուրն անտէր կը մնայ:
A killer's sabre will lose its master.

Արիւնն արնով չեն լուանայ, ջրով կը լուանան:
You do not wash blood with blood, but with water.

Քոռն ինչպէս կ'աչէ Աստծուն, Աստուած էլ էնպէս կ'աչէ
 քոռին:
The way the blind look at God, God looks at the blind.

Բախտ ու ճակատագիր *Luck and destiny*

Երեսին մի' նայիր, բախտին նայիր:
Don't look at her face, look at her fate.
 [i.e., You don't have to be beautiful in order to be lucky.]

Երկու երնէկ մի տեղ չի լինի:
Two blessings cannot be in one place.
 [i.e., Fortune cannot be perfect.]

Ինքը քուն, բախտն արթուն:
He is asleep, his luck is awake.

Բախտը իրան-իրան կու գայ:
Luck comes by itself.

Աստղով եղար՝ լեռ քարի վրայ երթաս, կը կանաչի:
If you are blessed with a star, even rocks will thrive when you step on them.

Ոչ ֆալաքին վստահի, ո'չ քու մալին յուսացի:
Rely neither on your fate, nor on your wealth.

էն թալեհն ունինք, որ վազող ջրին երթանք՝ կը կտրի:
With our luck, even if we go to running water it will dry up.

Բախտը գէշին (տգեղ), տարտը խորոտին (գեղեցիկ):
The ugly have good fortune; the beautiful, misfortune.

Անբախտ մարդը ծովերն էլ երթայ, կը ցամաքին:
Even the ocean will dry up when the unlucky goes in.

Կարկուտը ծեծած տեղը կը ծեծէ:
The hail hits more where it hit before.

Աշխարհքս չարիս է, պտոյտ է գալիս:
The world is a wheel, it is turning.

Որին աստղն շիրին (պայծառ) է, որինը՝ քռռ (կոյր):
The star of some is bright, of others blind [i.e. bleak].

Ում բախտը ծռուեց, նրա ձին ախոռումը էլ կը դառնայ:
If your fate turns ill, your horse turns into a donkey in the stall.

Բախտ կայ, փող կը մաղէ, բախտ կայ, ալիւր կը չաղէ:
Fate has it that some sift florins and others stir flour.*

Մարդուն թող բախտ եղնի, թող մէկ աչքը քռռ եղնի:
Let my good luck be nigh, let me be blind in one eye.

Քաջալ մարդը լաւ բախտ կ'ունենայ:
A bald man has good luck.

Ֆալաքը (բախտ) եղած ժամանակը պիտի բռնես:
Good fortune should be seized at the right time.

Ճակատի գրածը չի ջնջուի:
You cannot erase what is written on your forehead.

Ինչ որ գրած է, գրած է:
Whatever is written, is written.

Մօրէն ծնուեցաւ, գրուեցաւ ճակատին:

When he was born of his mother, it was written on his forehead.

Ինչ տեղ ումուտ (յոյս) չունես, էնտեղ ա խոտ բուսնում:

Where you don't expect it, there grass will grow.

Մարդ իր ճակատագրի տէրն է

Everyone is the architect of his own destiny

Գնա ծովն ընկիր, ճակտիս գիրն անանկ է ըսէ:

Go jump into the sea, and then say, "It was my destiny."

Մարդ ինչ որ իր ձեռով կ'անի, աշխարհ չի անի:

What (harm) you do to yourself with your own hands, the world cannot do to you.

Մարդուն քաշածը իր խելքէն է:

It's your own brain that causes you pain.

Հազար թշնամի հաւաքուին քեզի չեն կրնար վնասել որքան դուն քեզի:

If a thousand enemies would unite, they could not harm you as much as you can harm yourself.

Արծիւը իր փետուրներէն չիսուած նետով կը վիրաւորուի:

The eagle is killed by the arrow made with its own feathers.

Ինքն իրան վէր (գետին) ընկնողը լաց չի լինի:

He who falls by himself, should not cry.

Տէրտէրի մասին

About the priest

Կարգը օրհնած, ինքն անիծած:

His order is blessed, though he is damned.

Տէրտէրին հարսնիք կանչեցին, մաշտոցը հետը տարաւ:
*They called the priest to a wedding, he took his mashtots**
along.

[Indicating the priest's dependence on written material.]

Տէրտէրն առնելուն ղոչաղ ա, տալուն՝ նաչաղ:
The priest is good at taking, bad at giving.

Սար ու ձոր, տէրտէրի փոր:
The priest's belly, (is like) hill and valley.

Ժամտուն քանի ջոջ լինի, տէրտէրն իր գիտցածը կը կարդայ:
However many notables in the church, the priest will read what he knows.

Դու իմս գիտես, ես քունը, տէրտէրը՝ մեր երկուսինը:
You know all about me, I know all about you, the priest knows all about both of us.

Տէր ելաւ տիրունն է, տէր չելաւ՝ տէրտէրունն է:
If the owner shows up, it's his; if he doesn't, it's the priest's.

Տէրտէրի փորը մեծ կ'ըլլայ, ճեպը՝ օխտը:
The priest has a big belly and seven pockets.

Տէրտէրը զմէկ գիտի, իրիցկինը՝ զերկուք:
The priest knows one thing, his wife knows two.

Քահանէն քաւարան չունի. եա արքայութիւն, եա դժոխք:
There is no purgatory for a priest: either heaven or hell.

Երբ իրիցկինը մեռնի, տէրտէրն էն պահ կ'իմանայ, որ մահ կայ:
Only when his wife dies, will the priest know that death exists.

Սատանին կը հաւատան, տէրտէրին չեն հաւատայ:
They believe the devil, but not the priest.

Առաւօտը որ տէրտէր տեսնաս, գործդ թարս պիտի գնայ:
If you see a priest in the morning, it's bad luck.

Աստուած արու և էգ արար, վարդապետներին ո՞վ արար:
God created women and men, but who created those
clergymen?

Մեղք, յանցանք, արդարութիւն
Sin, guilt, justice

Աշխարհքը մեղքէն ծանր բան չկայ:
In this world, nothing is worse than sin.

Ոտքդ քարին դարնուի, խղճմտանքդ քննէ՛:
When you stumble on a stone, examine your conscience.

Մեղքը սամուր քուրք (մուշտակ) ըլնի, վրադ մի՛ առնի:
Even if guilt is a sable coat, don't take it on!

Մարդը քուն, մեղքը զարթուն:
Man asleep, his sins at work.

Մարդ որ կայ, մեղքի տուն ա:
Man is a house of sin.

Ամէն մարդի մեղքը իրանից կ'ուզեն:
Everybody must account for his own sins.

Մեղաւորին ո՞վ է տուել արքայութիւն:
Who has ever granted heaven to the guilty?

Ես մեղաւոր, դուն մեղաւոր, արքայութիւն ո՞վ երթայ:
If I am a sinner and you are a sinner, for whom is paradise?

Մեղաւորի մեղքէն թմրի արդարը:
From the sins of the guilty the innocent suffer.

Մեղաւորին փուշը տոշակին վրան է:
The thorns of the guilty are on their mattresses.

Պահք չբռնողը Զատիկին համը չի գիտեր:
He who doesn't fast won't enjoy Easter.

Սոխ չեմ կերել, որ բերանս այրի:
I didn't eat onions for my mouth to burn.
[Used by people who insist on their innocence.]

Մեղքերը երկար գաղտնի չեն մնար
You cannot hide your sins for long

Թաքուն բանը քառասուն օրից յայտնի կը լինի:
What's done in secret will be known within forty days.

Թաքուն ցուլ եկողը (բեղմնաւորուողը), աչկարայ
(ակնյայտօրէն) կը ծնի:
You get pregnant in secret, you give birth in public.

Նիզակը պարկը չի մնա:
You cannot keep an arrow in a sack.

Գիշերուայ գողին ցերեկով կը բռնեն:
A thief of the night will be caught in daylight.

Գողուն-բողուն, քառասուն օր է:
A thief and a harlot can hide only forty days.

Երազ **Dreams**

Երազն առաջնախօս ա:
Dreams are a foreboding.

Երազ կայ, որ օրն է կատարուում, երազ էլ կայ՝ տարին:
Some dreams come true in a day, others in a year.

Երազը մինչեւ կեսօր կը կատարուի:
A dream comes true till midday.

Գէշ տեղ պառկողը գէշ երազներ կը տեսնէ:
He who sleeps in a bad place, will dream bad dreams.

Սովածը հաց կը տեսնի երազում, ծարաւը՝ ջուր:
The hungry dream of bread, the thirsty of water.

Նախապաշարուում Superstition

Չար աչքը քարն էլ ճաքացնում ա:
An evil eye can crack even a stone.

Աչքն գտոյնէն (աշխարհ) ա կերէր:
The (evil) eye has eaten up the world.

Երկու աչքը մէկ գրողի բան կ'անէ:
Two evil eyes can do the work of a grogh.*

Հասակով գաճաճէն հեռու կեցիր, զի Աստուած գլխուն է
 զարկեր:
Stay away from dwarves, for God has struck them on the head.

Շէկ մարդի աչքը զօրեղ կ'ըլնի:
The blond man's eye is powerful.

Փախի՛ր մազոտ կնիկէն, անմազ մարդէն:
Stay away from hairy women and hairless men.

Ծիծեռնակը տան շինութիւն է, ծիտը տան աւերութիւն է:
A swallow brings fortune to a house, a sparrow brings ruin.

Կատուն թաթիկներովը երեսը լուաց, գիտցի՛ր որ անձրեւ
պիտի գայ:

When the cat washes its face with its paws, rain will fall.

Ամանդ լպստի, որ կնիկդ սիրուն լինի:
Sop up your plate, so your wife will be beautiful.

Երեխի եղունգն ու մազը մէկ տարի չեն կտրի:
You should not cut a baby's nails and hair for a year.

Դատարկ կուժ եկաւ առաջդ, բանդ ձախ պիտի երթայ:
If you see someone coming toward you with an empty pitcher,
things will go wrong for you.

Ուրախութիւնից մազն է երկարում, տարտից՝ եղունգը:
Joy makes the hair grow; worry, the nails.

Ձծնած երեխին չոր մի՛ կարի:
Do not sew clothes for an unborn baby.

Հանք (հանելուկ) մի՛ ըսէ, թանկութիւն կ'ըլնի:
Don't tell a riddle, prices will go up.

Կնիկմարդը հաւ չի մորթի:
A woman should not slaughter a chicken.

Ձեռքդ կը քերուի, խամբթ պիտի գայ:
If your palm is itchy, good luck is on its way.

Օջախը ջրով չեն հանդցնի:
Don't put out the odjakh's fire with water.*

Օջախին մոխիրը քամուն չեն տայ:
You don't cast the ashes of the odjakh to the wind.*

Հիւանդը որ գնալիք է, մատաղը չի օգնէ:
If the sick must go, the matagh won't help .*
[i.e., Sacrifices won't help if the sick is destined to die.]

Մատաղի միտով փոր չի կշտանալ:
You should not eat your fill of matagh.*

Սատանան խառնած թնդրէն կ'ելլէ:
The devil will appear from a stirred toneer.*

Սատանան կրակից փախ ա:
The devil avoids the fire.

Սատանէն կիրակնամտին չարութիւն կ'անէ:
On Sunday's eve, the devil does evil.

Խաչն եկաւ, դէւ խափանաւ:
(When) the cross appeared, the dev was barred.*

Գիշերը սուփրէն (սեղանի ծածկոց) չեն թափ տալ:
You should not shake out a tablecloth in the evening.

Գիշերուայ սաքըը (փռնգտոց) խէր ա:
It's good luck to sneeze in the evening.

Անէծք և օրհնէնք **Cursing and Blessing**

Անէծքն անիծողին կը դառնայ:
The curse will return to the curser.

Անէծքը երկու բերնանի սուր ա:
A curse is a double-edged sword.

Անիրաւ անէծքը չի բռնի:
An unjust curse will not work.

Անէծքը գիրկ մը քար է. (մէկը չդպչի միւսը կը դպչի):
Cursing is a skirtful of stones; (if one doesn't hit, another will).

Օրհնանքն ու անէծքը երկու բերնանի թուր է. հա՛մ դէսն ա կտրոււմ, հա՛մ դէնը:

The blessing and the curse are a double-edged sword; it cuts both ways.

Հօր ձէնն Աստուած թէզ (չուտ) կը լսի:
God will heed a father's voice quickly.

Հօր անէծքը կը բռնէ:
A father's curse will catch.

Սեւագլխի անէծքը քարին որ դիպչի, քարը կը պատռի:
Even a stone would crack, if a priest cursed it.

Մօր անէծքը չի բռնի, ծծի կաթը դէմ կ'առնի:
A mother's curse won't work; the milk she has given from her breast will block it.

Մօր մէկ օրհնէնքը, օխտը վարդապետի անէծք կը քանդէ:
A mother's blessing will lift the curse of seven priests.

Յաջողութիւն և ճախորդութիւն *Good and bad fortune*

Ամէն օր ջուրը գերան չի բերի:
Not everyday does the water carry logs.

Ամէն ջուր գերան չի բերի:
Not all waters carry logs.

Ամէն օր կուժը ջուր չի բերի:
The pitcher does not bring water everyday.

Մարդու մամը ամէն օր տղայ չի բերի:
Mothers don't give birth to a son everyday.

Ամէն հաւկիթ երկու դեղնուց չունենար:
Not every egg will have two yolks.

Չէ եղեր գիշեր, որ չէ լուսցեր:
There has never been a night not followed by daylight.

Յերեկով ման եկածս, գիշերով հանդիպեց:
What I was looking for in daylight I found at night.

«Ես բախտ չունիմ»
“I am unlucky”

Իմ հացս աղ չունի:
My bread has no salt.
[i.e., My good acts are not known.]

Էջը մերն է, որ փալան չունի:
It's only our donkey that has no saddle.

Իմ կարգս որ հասնի, ամէն բան կը չորնայ:
When it comes to me, everything dries up.

Ամէնքը արտ կը ցանեն, չիտակ կը բուսնի, իմ ցանածս
ծուռ կը բուսնի:
Everyone else's grain grows straight, mine grows crooked.

Աչխարհ ցանեց, լաւ բուսաւ. ես ցանեցի, մէջ ու դուրս
բուսաւ:
Everybody sowed, it grew strong; I sowed, it grew all wrong.

Աչխարհքս լայնարձակ է, ի՛նչ օգուտ որ սիրտս նեղ է:
What is it to me that the world is immense, if my heart is tense?

Մենք ճրագլիս ունենանք, իշի պոչն էլ լիս կը տայ:
If we happen to have candle-light, even the donkey's tail will
light up.

Ամառուայ արեւէն ի՛նչ հասկցայ, որ ձմեռուայ արեւէն ի՛նչ հասկնամ:

What did I gain from the summer sun that I should now gain anything from the winter sun?

Առաւօտուայ արեւից ի՛նչ տաքացայ, որ իրիկնապահին ի՛նչ տաքանամ:

What warmth did I get from the morning sun that I should now get any warmth from the evening sun?

Մենք գողութեան ելանք, լուսնկան առջի իրիկուընէ ծագեցաւ:

When we went out to steal, the moon had risen the night before.

Երկու սափաթ (կողով) քաք ուղարկեն մեր քաղաքը, մէկը մեր տունը կու գայ:

If they send two baskets of shit to our city, one will come to our house.

Երկինքէն փալան թափի, մեր ճիտը չ'իյնար:

If saddles fall from the sky, not one would fall on our backs.

VIII
Գիւղ եւ քաղաք
Country and City



THEMES

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Հայրուն և ուրիշներուն մասին
About Armenians and others

Հայը մինչեւ չյոգնի, չի նստի:
The Armenian won't sit down if he isn't tired.

Հայի վերջին խելքն է գովելի:
Armenians have good ideas in hindsight.

Քիչ ենք, բայց հայ ենք:
We are not many, but we are Armenians.

(Հայրուն) մէկը քիչ է, երկուսը՝ շատ:
One (Armenian) is too few; two are too many.
[i.e., Armenians are incompatible.]

Հայ ենք ու վայ ենք:
We are Armenians, and we are a pain.

Հայու օրօրոց կոտորուկ ա:
The cradle of the Armenian is crushed.

Հայի «տոկէ՛ք-տոկէ՛ք»-ին ռաստ չես եկել:
You have never experienced the Armenian's "Charge!"
[i.e., Armenians can be rebellious.]

Հայ տղամարդու սիրտը, հայ ծովին անդունդը, երկուսն
մոլթ են:
The hearts of Armenian men and the bottom of the sea are secrets.

Թուրքն ըսեր է, կեր, յետոյ խօսէ. Հայն ըսեր է, թէ՛ կեր,
թէ՛ խօսէ:
The Turk said, "Eat first and speak afterwards." The Armenian said, "Eat and speak at the same time."

Գինի, հրմէնին (հայի) տինի (հաւատ):
Wine is the Armenians' faith.

Հայրենիքի և դարիպի (պանդուխտ) մասին
*About the fatherland and the gharib**

Հայրենեաց քարինքը աւելի տաք են քան Բաբելոնի
 փռները:
*The stones of my native country are warmer than the ovens of
 Babylon.*

Հայի աշխարհ, վայի աշխարհ:
World of Armenians, world of sorrow.

Հայաստան, որբաստան:
Land of Armenians, land of orphans.

Հայաստան, քարաստան:
Land of Armenians, land of stones.

Ամէն փէտ չերեփ չի լինի, ամէն սար՝ Մասիս:
*Not every wood can make a ladle, not every mountain can
 match Masis. [Mount Ararat is also called 'Masis' in Armenian.]*

Ղարիպին հացը լեղի ա, ջուրը աղու (թունաւոր):
A gharib's bread is bitter, his water poisonous.*

Ղարիպի ուշքը միշտ ետեւն ա:
A gharib's heart is always back home.*

Ղարիպի հալը Ղարիպը կ'իմանայ:
Only a gharib knows how a gharib feels.*

Հօրս ու մօրս արիւնը քաղցր ա, վաթանի (հայրենիքի)
 հողն ու ջուրն անուշ:
*My father's and my mother's blood are dear; my country's
 earth and water are sweet.*

Ղարիպը բամբաստուէց, դանգատաւորը շատացաւ:
When a gharib is blamed, many plaintiffs will come forward.*

Ղարիպի համար մի օրը մի տարի աւ:
For a gharib, a day can seem a year.*

Ղարիպ մարդը օտար տեղ երես չի ունենայ:
In a strange country, a gharib will have no face.*

Բնութիւն եւ գիւղական կեանք
Nature and country life

Մարտի իննին, լազլազը (արագիլը) բնին:
On the ninth of March, storks are back in their arch.
 [Lit.: ... in their nest.]

Վերջացաւ մարտս, գնաց տարտս:
March has ended, my worries have ended.

Մարտը մէկ օրն օխտ (եօթը) կնիկ կը փոխայ:
In one day, March can change seven wives.

Մարտ, խենդ մարդ:
March, crazy man.

Ով որ ապրիլին ցանայ, ապրիլի ու քաղայ, ով որ մայիսին
 ցանայ, մզմզուկ (չնչին բան) քաղայ:
*He who sows in April will reap a great amount; he who sows
 in May, not even a pound.*

Մինչեւ յունիս, ունիս նէ, ունիս, չունիս նէ, չունիս:
By June, if you have it, you have it; if you don't, then forget it.

Տարուան չորս եղանակները հարեւան են, էն էլ մին-մնու
 հակառակ:
The four seasons are neighbors, all against each other.

Էլը որ զռաց, գարուն ա:
When the donkey roars, it's spring.

Ամառուայ անձրեւին, ձմեռուայ արեգակին մի՛ հաւատա:
Don't rely on summer's rain and winter's sunshine.

Ամռան տղան, վարդի տղայ, ձմռան տղան, մոխրի տղայ:
A summer child, a rosy child; a winter child, an ashy child.

Ամառուայ փուշը, ձմեռուայ նուշը:
A summer splinter is an almond in winter.

Ամառուայ հասած տանձը աշուն չի տեսնի:
A pear ripened in summer doesn't last till fall.

Լաւ ծառը, լաւ է վատ մարդիցը:
A good tree is better than a bad person.

Տարի կայ օրուան կը պահէ, օր կայ՝ տարուան:
Some years feed a day, some days feed a year.

Կհւ գայ տարին, հետը բարին:
The year comes, and the goodness with it.

Ձմեռ բտէ՛ (պարարտացնէր), գարուն կթէ՛:
In winter feed; in summer reap.

Հողով ա ապրում արար աշխարհը:
The whole world lives from the earth.

Ջրի մօտի ծառը արագ մեծանում ա, արագ էլ պառաւում:
A tree near the water grows quickly, but also ages quickly.

Քամու խէրն էլ շատ է, շառն էլ:
Wind does a lot of good, and a lot of harm.

Ձմեռուայ վարդը կրակն է:
Fire is the winter's rose.

Գիւղացի և քաղաքացի
Peasant and townsman

Ռանչպարի (հողագործի) տօշակը սեւ հողն է, բարձր՝ չոր քարը:

Black earth is the peasant's mattress, and dry stone his pillow.

Գեղացի - խառ տեղացի:

A man from the country is a good countryman.

Գեղացու գեղեցիկը շատ կա:

There is much beauty among peasants.

Գեղացին մեռնի, կենէ իւր եզին կաշին մնայ կու, քաղքըցուն ի՞նչ մնայ կու:

When a peasant dies, at least his ox's hide stays behind; what does the townsman leave behind?

Գեղի շունը քաղաք մտնէ նէ, պոչը սղմած կը քալէ:

When a country dog comes to the city, it walks with its tail between its legs.

Գեղացու մէջքը որ տուզ եղաւ, ցանածը լաւ չի բուսնի:

If a peasant's back is straight, his harvest will be crooked.

Գեղացու փորը քաղքցու հացով չի կշտանա:

You cannot fill a peasant's stomach with a townsman's food.

Գեղացին չկերած բանը չ'ուտեր:

A country man won't eat what he hasn't eaten before.

Գեղացին լաւ է, քան չարակամ իշխանը:

It's better to be a peasant than a bad-hearted prince.

Աղքատին գեղը գցա, թէ չապրի գետը գցա:

Throw the poor man into the country; if he is still poor, throw him into the river.

Ընտանի կենդանիներ
Domestic animals

Էծը սատանի հօրեղբոր տղէն է:
The goat is the devil's cousin.

Ուլ տեսած, սատանայ տեսած, երկուսն էլ մի բան է:
Seeing a baby goat is like seeing a devil.
[Based on the folk belief that a goat has the devil inside.]

Շունը շինականի պահապան ընկեր է:
A dog is a peasant's guardian and friend.

Շունը հաւատարիմ է, կատուն՝ գող:
The dog is faithful, the cat is a thief.

Մարդու դռան շունն էլ շնորհքին պէտք է լինի:
Even the dog at your door should look decent.

Կատուն կեղծաւոր կ'ըլնի:
The cat is two-faced.

Ամէն մարդ առաւօտեան է լացւում, կատուն՝ իրիկունը:
People wash themselves in the morning, cats in the evening.

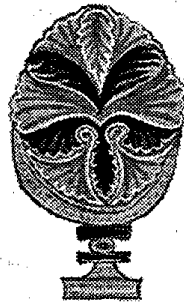
Լաւ ձին անգին ա, վատը՝ պատիժ:
A good horse is priceless, a bad one a pain.

Էշը մնայ - բզէ', ձին մնայ - թո'ղ, գնա:
When the ass comes to a halt, jab it to go; when the horse comes to a halt, leave it and go.

Կինս կու տամ, ջորիս չեմ տայ:
I would give my wife away, but not my mule.

IX

Կենսափորձ, Կրթութիւն,
մասնագիտութիւն
Experience, Education, Profession



THEMES

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Արհեստ և արհեստաւոր
Trade and workmen

Փեշակն որ կայ, ոսկէ պիլազուկ է:
A trade is a golden bracelet.

Արհեստ ունեցողը մինչեւ կէսօրին անօթի կը մնայ,
չունեցողը՝ մինչեւ իրիկուն:
With a trade you starve till midday; without one, till evening.

Արհեստը արհեստաւորի ձեռքին գերի է:
The trade is a slave in the workman's hands.

Անուստայ արհեստը հարամ է:
An unmastered trade is worthless.

Արհեստաւորը արհեստաւորին ծուռ կը նայի:
One tradesman cannot stand another.

Դերձակին ասացին, քոչի՛, ասեղը խրեց եախէն (օձիք) ու
գնաց:
They told the tailor to move; he stuck his needle in his collar and moved.

[i.e., A tailor does not need many tools for his trade.]

Սովորած լաւ փեշակդ հետդ գերեզման չտանես:
Don't take a trade you have mastered to the grave.
[i.e., Teach your trade to others.]

Իր արհեստին ծուռ նայողը կուշտ չ'ուտեր:
He who dislikes his trade, will never eat his fill.

Բան տեսնողը հաճաթն (գործիք) ա:
It's the tool that does the work.

Ղանիաթն (եռանդ) ու զանիաթը (արհեստ) աղբար են:
Vigor and trade are brothers.

Լաւ հնձուորը դաշտում էլ կը հնձի, սարումն էլ:

A good reaper will reap both in the valley and on the mountain.

Կով կթողը կով կթողին չի կարող խաբել:

One cow milker cannot defraud another.

Մեղրը ծախողը մատը կը լպստի:

The seller of honey will lick his finger.

[i.e., A tradesman will profit from his trade.]

Ոչխարի ճիկեարը չոպանը կ'ուտի:

It's the shepherd who eats the liver of the sheep.

[The liver is considered to be the tastiest part of the sheep.]

Խաղողի լաւը բաղուանչին (պարտիզպան) կ'ուտի:

The best grapes go to the vineyard keeper.

Մանգաղուորի ձեռքէն մանգաղը չեն առնի:

You don't take the sickle from the reaper's hand.

Պոստանչու ընծան կամ սեխ կ'ըլի, կամ ձմերուկ:

A gift from a gardener will be either a melon or a watermelon.

Պոստանչուն սերմ չեն ծախի:

You can't sell seeds to a gardener.

Զարգացած և կրթուած

Well-read and educated

Ով կարդայ, նա մարդ ա:

Education makes the person.

Կարդալը ոսկի պիլազուկ է:

Education is a golden bracelet.

Ուսում ստացածը սոված չի մնալ:

The learned will never starve.

Կարդալն եփուկ հաց է, դրած մարդու ծոց:

Education is a well-baked bread in the pocket.

[Lit.: ... in the “breast” where valuables were kept.]

Շատ կարդացողը հասկացող կ'եղնի:

A well-educated person is an understanding person.

Սեւ գիրքը կարմիր օրեր կը բերէ:

The black book will bring red days.

[“Black” is a metaphor for the color of the print, and “red” for “brightness, bliss, happiness.”]

Քանի լեզու գիտես, այնքան մարդ ես:

You are as many a person as the languages you know.

Մանկութեան ուսումը քարի վրայ փորուածք է, ծերութեան ուսումը սառի վրայ գրուածք է:

What you learned in youth is carved in stone; what you learned in old age is written on ice.

Գիտութիւն, հարստութիւն:

Scholarship – prosperity.

Խրատ ամէն փորձանքէ

Lessons drawn from misfortune

Ամէն փորձանքին մէկ-մէկ խրատ:

From each pitfall (you learn) a lesson.

էշը որ մի տեղ ցեխն ընկաւ, էլ էն տեղովը չի անցնի:

If a donkey sinks in a puddle, he'll never take that route again.

Ձուրը չի յնողը լողալ չի սորվիր:

If you don't jump into the water, you'll never learn to swim.

Հէքիմն էն է, որ գլուխն է եկեր:

The real doctor is he who endured much.

Խրատ տուող միշտ կայ

There is always somebody to give advice

Սէլը որ կոտրուի, խրատ տուող շատ կ'ըլնի:

When the carriage breaks down, there will be many to give advice.

Խրատ տուողը շատ կ'ըլլի, հաց տուողը՝ քիչ:

To give advice there will be many; to give bread very few.

Տակէս ելեր է, ինծի լող կը սորվեցնէ:

He came out of me, and teaches me how to swim.

[Cited mostly by parents whose children try to instruct them.
Originally a vulgar allusion to excrement floating in the water.]

Բանն էն չի, որ ասեմ խրատ, բանն էն է, որ առնես վրադ:

The point is not that I give advice, but rather that you take it.

Սովորութիւն

Habit

Սորվածը չի կայնի:

He who is in the habit will never quit.

Սովորութիւնը բնութիւն կ'ըլլայ:

Habit becomes nature.

Ոսկոր բերող շունը ոսկոր ալ կը տանի:

A dog that brings bones will also carry away bones.

Սովորին մի՛ պակասցնի, անսովորին մի՛ սովորցնի:

Do not deprive the accustomed; do not accustom the deprived.

Էջն իր չկերած խոտն որ ուտէ, գլուխը կ'ուռի:

When a donkey eats a grass he never ate before, his head swells.

[In Armenian, "to get a swollen head" means "to get sick."]

Աշխարհքը ինչպէս բռնես, էնէնց էլ կ'երթայ:

As you handle things in this world, so they go.

Ո՛չ կռնակդ երկու լաթի սորվեցուր, ո՛չ փորդ երկու հացի:

Don't let your back get used to two shirts, nor your stomach to two breads.

Դաստիարակութիւն, օրինակ

Upbringing, example

Տղան չծեծողը ծունկը կը ծեծէ:

He who doesn't beat his child will beat his knees.

Ծուռ ծառը պղտիկուց կը շտկեն:

A crooked tree must be straightened out when young.

Եզ կայ լեզուով կ'երթայ, եզ՝ չիպղով (մտրակ):

Some oxen move with words, others with whips.

Հազար անգամ թուք ու մուր, մէկ անգամ օրինակ տուր:

Instead of scolding a thousand times, set an example once.

Էջը իշի մօտ կապես, եա խուն (սովորութիւն) կը սովորի, եա խաւիւթը (քնաւորութիւնը):

If you put two donkeys together, they will pick up each others' habits and manner.

Աչքն ինչ տեսնի, էն էլ կ'անի:
The eyes do what they see.

Լաւ մարդու հետ տոտա՛ (քալէ), լաւ օրինակ ա՛ռ:
Walk with a good person, learn a good lesson.

Խաղողն խաղողին կ'աչայ, կը սեւնայ:
Grapes ripen by seeing others ripen.

Ծաղիկը ծաղկին նայելով կը բացուի:
A flower blooms by seeing others bloom.

Շունը շանը նայելով կը հաջէ:
Dogs bark by watching other dogs bark.

Փորձառութիւն Experience

Աշխարհքս տես ու ուս է:
The world consists of seeing and learning.

Շատ բան կայ, մինչեւ չսորվիս, չես կարող անել. շատ բան էլ կայ, մինչեւ չանես, չես սորվի:
There are things you cannot do until you learn them; there are other things you cannot learn until you do them.

Փորձուած թանը լաւ ա, քանց անփորձ մածունը:
The tasted tan* is better than the untasted madzoun*.

Փորձած սատանէն լաւ է, քանց անփորձ հրեշտակը:
The devil you know is better than the unknown angel.

Շատ ապրողը շատ բան չի իմանայ, շատ ման եկողը շատ բան կ'իմանայ:
He who lives long doesn't know much, but he who travels a lot, does.

Զփորձած ձիու ետեւից մի՛ անցնիւ:
Don't walk behind a horse you haven't tried.

Թաղա (նոր) չորը հնի վրայ կը ձեւեն:
They cut a new dress from the pattern of an old one.

Զփորձած մարդից պարտք չառնես:
Don't borrow money from someone you have not tested.

Զփորձած մարդու սիրտդ չբանաս:
Don't confide to a person you haven't tried.

Փորձած հարեւանը անփորձ բարեկամից լավ է:
A neighbor who has proved his worth is better than a relative⁵⁰ who hasn't.

Ով քիչ է փորձել, քիչ էլ գիտի:
He who has experienced little knows little.

Շատ ապրողը շատ բան կը տեսնէ:
He who lives long sees a lot.

Կրկին փորձելը յիմարութիւն է:
Trying all over again is foolish.

Մինչեւ մի մարդու հետ մի փութ աղ չուտես, չես
 ճանչնալ:
You don't know a person until you've eaten a pout of salt with him.*

Ուստէն էն է, որ գլուխն է եկել:
The master is he who has endured a lot.

Ականջիդ օղ ըլլան ըսածներս:
Let my words pierce your ears as earrings do.

Ինձ համար կ'անես, քեզ համար կը սովորես:
You do it for me, you learn it for yourself.

Շատ գիտցողը շատ կը սխալի:
He who knows much mistakes much.

Բան չընես, չես սխալիր:
If you do nothing, you never make mistakes.

Թէ խաչն իմն ա, գորութիւնը ես գիտեմ:
If it is my cross, I know its power.

Ծովն անց կենողը, առուում չի խեղդուի:
He who has crossed a sea will not drown in a brook.

Բնածին յատկութիւնները չեն փոխուիր
Innate qualities cannot be changed

Խելքը բնովի է, ոչ թէ գնովի:
Brains come with birth; you cannot buy them.

Գայլին ձագը կրթելով դառ չ'ըլլար:
You cannot make a lamb from a wolf-cub by educating it.

Խելօք մանուկն օրօրոցում յայտնի կ'անի:
A bright child shows in the cradle.

Ճուտը ձուումը մաշուր (յայտնի) կ'ըլի, երեխէն՝ օրօրոցում:
A chick shows itself in the egg; a child in the cradle.

Այծը ուրուց յայտնի կ'ըլլայ, մանուկն ի օրոց:
A goat shows itself as a kid; a child in the cradle.

Աղէկ օրն առաւօտից, աղէկ տարին դարնանից:
A good day shows in the morning; a good year in the spring.

Ծուռ փէտը տաշելով չի շտկի:
A crooked piece of wood can't be straightened by planing it.

Գայլը բուրդը կը փոխէ, բայց բնոյթը չի փոխեր:
The wolf changes its coat, but not its nature.

Կարմիր կովը իր կաշուցը դուրս չի գալ:
A red cow will never abandon its skin.

Սէւ շունը չի սպիտակի:
A black dog will never turn white.

Վատ օրը կը լաւանայ, վատ մարդը չի լաւանայ:
A bad day can improve, a bad person cannot.

Օձն իրա շապիկը կը փոխէ, բնութիւնը չի փոխէ:
The snake will change its skin, but not its nature.

Փիս մարդը, Զատիկին էլ փիս կ'ըլնի:
A bad person will be bad even at Easter.

Կաթի հետ մտածը, հոգու հետ դուրս կը գալ:
What goes in with (mother's) milk, comes out with the soul.

Շան պոչը կաղապար դնելով չի չիտկի:
You cannot straighten the dog's tail by moulding it.

Խոզն իր խոզութիւնը չի թողուր:
A pig will never give up its piggery.

Աւշանը ինչքան բեջարես (խնամել), ուհան չի դառնայ:
No matter how much care you give to weeds, they won't become basil.

Թարխունը իր քոքին կը բուսնի:
Tarragon grows from its roots.

Մօրուց խենդ ըլլողին, սուրբ Սարգիսն ի՞նչ անի:
What can Saint Sarkis do for someone born mad?

[Saint Sarkis is one of the patron saints in the Armenian Christian faith.]

Ագռաւը ինչքան լողանայ, դադ չի լինի:

No matter how often it bathes, the raven will never become a goose.

Կովի կէօրա մողիկ կ'եղնի:

Like cow, like calf.

Ծառն իր պտղէն կը ճանաչուի:

You recognize a tree by its fruit.

Պղողը բրինձ չի լինի:

The bough cannot become rice.*

Շան պոչը կտրելով, անմեղ գառ չի դառնայ:

By cutting its tail, the dog won't become an innocent lamb.

Թուխ աչքը մօրուց պիտի, դեղ դրածը թեղ կ'աւրի:

Black eyes must be innate; what is painted will fade.

Իչի քուռակը վերջն էլ կը դառնայ:

The child of an ass will end up as an ass.

Էլը թիմարելով նժոյգ չի դառնայ:

You cannot train a donkey to become a horse.

Անլի կերակուրին ճար կայ, անլի խելքին ճար չկայ:

For a flat meal there is a remedy; for a flat brain, there is none.

Էլը ջոջանալով թաւլաբաշի (ախոռապետ) չի դառնայ:

Just by growing big, a donkey won't become master of the barn.

Շնէն գառ չի ծնի:

From a dog, no lamb will be born.

Օձի ձագը հաւի ձագ չի լինի:

The snake's young cannot become a chick.

Խեւ աղջիկը, խեւ հարս կ'ըլնի, խեւ հարսը՝ խեւ տանտիկին:

A crazy maid will turn into a crazy wife; a crazy bride, into a crazy housewife.

Էլը հարիւր անգամ Երուսաղէմ է գնացել, նորէն էլ է մնացել:

After a hundred visits to Jerusalem, the ass remained an ass.

Շունը իր շնութիւնը կ'անի:

A dog will do its doggerly.

Միրանն իր ծառի տակին վէր կ'ընկնի:

The apricot falls under its tree.

Տանձը ծառէն հեռու չի ընկնի:

A pear doesn't fall far from its tree.

Գէշին հետ շփուողը կը գէշնայ

He who associates with evil becomes evil

Մրոտ պտուկին քսուողը կը մրոտի:

He who leans against a sooty jug gets sooty.

Ագռաւին ընկեր եղողը աղբէն դուրս չ'ելլար:

He who takes the raven for his companion is bound to stay in the dung.

Շան հետ լինես շահոտ կը գայ:

If you live among dogs, you will stink like a dog.

Գողին հետ ապրողը գողութիւն կը սորվի:

He who lives with thieves learns to steal.

Շան հետ պառկողը ոջլի հետ կը վեր կենայ:

He who goes to bed with a dog wakes up with lice.

X

Անարդարութիւն, հարստութիւն և
իշխանութիւն
Injustice, Wealth and Power



THEMES

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Անարդարութիւն
Injustice

Աշխարհն արօտ, մենք մէջը կարօտ:
The world is a plentiful mead, yet we are in need.

Աշխարհ ծով ա, մենք ծարաւ ենք:
The world is a sea, and we are thirsty.
[Arm. ծով “sea” is used metaphorically for “abundance.”]

Աշխարհքը ծով, մեզ համար սով:
The world has plenty, yet for us it is empty.
[Lit.: The world is a sea, for us there is famine.]

Մէկին ծով, միւսին սով:
One gets the feast [lit.: sea], the other the famine.

Մինն պոլտ-պոլտ, մինն փռթ-փռթ:
For some it drizzles, for others it pours.

Մէկն ուտելով կը մեռնի, մէկն աչելով (նայելով):
Some die from eating, some from watching others eat.

Աշխարհքին մէկդին կու լայ, մէկդին կը խնդայ:
One side of the world is crying, the other side is laughing.

Շատը շատի մօտ կ'երթայ:
Plenty goes to plenty.

Քերան կայ, հաց չկայ, հաց կայ, քերան չկայ:
Where there are mouths, there is no bread; where there is bread, there are no mouths.

Շատ դատողին, չալէ (բուրդ) չապիկ, քիչ դատողին, չարէ
(մետաքս) չապիկ:
For the hard work a woollen shirt; for the light work a silk shirt.

Ո՛վ դատի, ո՛վ ուտի:

Who is working, who is eating?

Ես բրդեմ, դու՞ խրթես:

I should do the crumbling, you should do the gulping?

Աչխատի Խաչիկ, ուտի տաճիկ:

Khachik does the work, tachik does the eating.*

[*Խաչիկ (Khachik), a diminutive of the full name Խաչատուր, stands here for the simple Armenian Christian worker, tachik* for the foreign exploiter.*]

Ինչ կ'ուտի տաճիկը, թող ուտի Խաչիկը:

Whatever the tachik eats, Khachik should eat as well.*

Ես եփեցի, դուն կերար:

I cooked it, you ate it.

Եղն աչխատի, ձին ուտի:

The ox does the deed, the horse gets the feed.

Քաշողը գիտէ, աշողն (դիտող) ի՛նչ գիտէ:

The sufferer [the worker] knows; what does the onlooker know?

Էշին հարսանիք կանչեցին, ասեց՝ հարկաւ ջուր կրելու էք տանում:

They called the donkey to a wedding; it said, "I am sure, you want me to carry your water."

Ուղտին ասացին. «Աչքդ լոյս, քեզ որդի է ծնուէլ:» Ասաց. «Ի՞նչ անեմ, որ իմ բեռը ինձանից չի պակասի:»

They told the camel, "Good news! A son is born to you." He answered, "What do I care, if it won't lessen my load?"

Զուտողի մալը ուտողին հալալ ա:

The wealth of those who do not spend it is well-deserved by those who spend it.

Շատ դատողին քիչն ա պաշար:
He who works hard has a small share.

Մեծեմ ես, ծեծկուրմ ես. երկուք դու, մէկ ե՞ս:
All the struggle is for me; why two for you, and one for me?

Մեծ ձուկը պղտիկին կուլ կու տայ:
Big fish will swallow the small.

Հաստ ու բարակ մի գին է, վա՛յ բարակ մանողին:
Thick or thin, it is the same pay; pity the one who spins thin
all day.

[About the spinning of wool which is paid by the weight.]

Խօսքը դատողինը չի, ուտողինն ա:
It's the eater, not the worker who has the final say.

Ուտողը չգիտէ, բրդողը գիտէ:
The eater doesn't know (the hardship), the worker does.

Ողորմի ուտողին, ո՛չ ողորմի բրդողին:
Blessed is the eater, not the worker.

Զօռն (ուժեղ) անզօրին կերել ա:
The powerful has eaten up the powerless.

Զրկանքով հարստացողի վերջը փուճ է:
He who gets rich by depriving himself is doomed.

Կապրի զրկուողը, չի ապրի զրկողը:
The deprived, not the depriver, will thrive.

Զրկուողն ապրեր է. վա՛յ եկեր է զրկողին:
The deprived survived; woe to those who deprived them.

Աշխատողը անօթի չի մնայ:
A worker will not starve.

Ով աշխատի, նա ուտի:
He who works, will eat.

Խաղ (երգ) չատ գիտեմ, ձայն չունիմ:
I know many songs, I have no voice.

*Զկանը հարցրրին, ծովեմէն ի՞նչ խապար ունիս. ասաւ,
 խապար չատ ունիմ, ամա բերանս ջրով լիքն է:*
*They asked the fish, "What's the news in the sea?" It replied,
 "I have lots of news, but my mouth is full of water."
 [On self-censorship]*

Բաղդադ էլ խուրմա չատ կայ. ինծի ի՞նչ:
There are a lot of dates in Baghdad; of what use is it to me?

Գետնի յատակին ալ դանձ չատ կայ. մեզ ի՞նչ:
Many riches are under the earth; of what use is it to us?

Բաղը չամիչ չատ ա. ինծի ու քեզի ի՞նչ:
*There are many raisins in the vineyard; what does it do for
 you and for me?*

Բռնութիւն եւ համերաշխութիւն *Violence and harmony*

Խաթրը չատ է քանց զօռը:
Compliance is better than violence.

Պառաւն էլ դժոխք չի երթայ, համա զօռով կը տանեն:
*The old hag wouldn't go to hell willingly, but she's taken by
 force.*

Դէւը դարբնոց չէր երթում, գլխին տալով տարան:
The dev didn't want to go to the forge, but they took him
 there by force.*

Թէ խաթրով չգնաս, չուանով կը տանեն:
If you don't go willingly, they will take you with a rope.

Շանը զօռով որսի չեն դրկի:
You cannot force a dog to go hunting.

Ուժով բաց արած վարդը հոտ չի ունենալ:
A rose forced open will not have a scent.

Օձը չաւելով (դիւթելով) դուրս կը հանեն ծակից:
With charm you can lure a snake out of its hole.

Դժուար կացութիւն *Difficult situations*

Օձուն վրայ կարիճն ալ կճեց:
After the snake bit, the scorpion stung too.

Գորտին կճածը, օձն ալ կը կճէ:
What is bitten by the frog, will also be bitten by the snake.

Անձրեւը ծեծածը կարկուտն էլ կը ծեծի:
What the rain hit, the hail will hit as well.

Ծովից ելանք, ընկանք ջրհեղեղ:
We got out of the sea and were caught by a flood.

Գէլից փախայ, արջի ճանկն ընկայ:
I escaped the wolf and got caught by the bear.

Կուշտ նստանք, անօթի կայնանք:
We sat down full, we got up hungry.

Ըսես՝ բոց կ'ըլնի, չըսես՝ խոց կ'ըլնի:
If you speak up, it's a war; if you don't, it's a sore.
[Lit.: If you speak up, it's a flame; if you don't, it's an ulcer.]

Ասես քիչ տարտ ունէանք, մեր հարսը պառկաւ՝ աղջիկ
բերաւ:

*As if we didn't have enough worries, our daughter-in-law
labored and gave birth to a girl.*

Վեր թքնեմ ունքս է, վար թքնեմ մօրուքս է:
I spit up, I hit my brow; I spit down, I hit my beard.

Ըսես, գէշ կ'ըլլաս, չըսես, էշ կ'ըլլաս:
If you speak up, you are nasty; if you don't, you are an ass.

Ներքելը չեմ նստի, վերելում էլ տեղ չկայ:
I will not sit below, and above there is no place.

Ուտէ՛ մոռուտալ է, նետէ՛ ափսոս է:
If you eat it, it is dirty; if you toss it, it's a pity.

Դէ արի, էշը ցեխից հան:
Now let's see how you pull the ass out of the mud.
[Used in difficult situations.]

Միութիւնը զօրութիւն է *Unity is strength*

Ժողովուրդը քնած առիւծ է, որ զարթնեց՝ էլ չի քնի:
*People are like sleeping lions; when they wake up, they sleep
no more.*

Մէջք-մէջքի որ տանք, սար շուռ կու տանք:
If we back each other up, we can overturn mountains.

Գեղ կանգնի, գերան կոտրի:
Get the village on its feet, it will smash the log to pieces.

Ընկերովի մահը հարսանիք ա:
Dying with friends is like being at a wedding.

Երկու կատու, կը խեղդեն մէկ շուն:
Two cats can strangle one dog.

Մի ձեռք ծափ չի տայ:
One hand cannot clap alone.

Աշխարհքով եղած բանը վախ չունի:
What affects the whole world should not be feared.

Մի ծիծեռնակով գարուն չի գայ:
There is no spring with one swallow.

Մի ծաղկով գարուն չի լինի:
There is no spring with one flower.

Մէկ կակալը (ընկոյզ) տոպրակի մէջ ձէն չի հանի:
A lone walnut cannot make noise in a sack.

Հարուստ և աղքատ *Rich and poor*

Հարուստի ուժն ու հոգին գրպանում ա:
A rich man's strength and soul are in his pocket.

Աստուած հարստի կողմոց ա:
God takes the side of the rich.

Հարստութիւն կայ իշխանավարի, հարստութիւն կայ
իշավարի:
Wealth makes some people princes, and others asses.

Օր բանող, օր ուտող:
Daily worker, daily eater.

Սուտը աղքատին դրամագլուխն է:
Lies are the poor man's capital.

Ծակը մեծ է, կարկատանը պզտիկ:
The hole is big, the patch is small.

Զուկը ձկան ասեց. «Դէնը պառկի»
«Ո՞րտեղ պառկեմ, երկուսս էլ մի թաւումն ենք
տապաւիւնում»

One fish said to another, "Move over."

"Where can I move? We are both being fried in the same
pan."

[On the futility of antagonism between fellow victims.]

Մէկ տունով չենք, մէկ հալով ենք:
We do not live in the same hut, but we are in the same boat.

Աղքատն ունի հաց ու պանիր, գիշերը քունը չի տանիր:
When a poor man has bread and cheese, at night he cannot
fall asleep (out of joy).

Աղքատին փորն են ճեղքեր, հազար «գալ տարի» են գտեր:
They cut the poor man's stomach and found a thousand 'next
year's.

[Poor people are fed promises which never come to fruition.]

Մի՛ սատկիր էչս, դարուն է բացւում, առուոյտ է ծլում:
Do not die, my donkey; spring is coming and the clover is
sprouting.

Շատը ուժից է, քիչը սիրուց է:
A great gift is given out of wealth, a small out of love.

Զեղած տեղից Աստուածն էլ ա բեզարած (յոգնած):
Even God is fed up with the poor.

Հացն եղէ ձիաւոր, մենք ոտաւոր, չենք հասնի:
Bread is on horseback and we, on foot, cannot catch it.

Հարուստի գութանն ա աւելանում, աղքատի՝ երեխէքը:
The rich get more ploughs, the poor more children.

Աղքատ զաղքատն է ատել, Աստուածն էլ՝ երկուսին:
The poor man hated the other poor man, and God hated
both.

Աղքատը որ հաւ կ'ուտէ, եա հաւն է հիւանդ, եա աղքատը:
When a poor man eats a chicken, either he or the chicken is
sick.

Սիրտս լին ա, ձեռս կարճ:
My heart is wide, my hands are tied.
[I am generous, but I am poor.]

Խեղճի ձեռը բռնող չի ըլի:
Nobody will lend a hand to the poor.

Խեղճին հաց տուող չէ, համա խելք խրատ տուող չատ
կ'ըլի:
To the poor, many will give advice, but not bread.

Ձիւնն ի՛նչ ա գիտում, թէ աղքատը փէտ չունի:
How could the snow know that the poor have no firewood?

Քառասուն գող մի չպլաղի (մերկ) չեն կարացել թալանել:
Forty thieves couldn't rob a naked man.

Գողն եկաւ, սեւերես գնաց:
The thief came, and he left in shame.

Տունը պարան մը չկայ, որ կախուի:
He doesn't even have a rope to hang himself.

Աղքատին երեսը նայող չկայ:
Nobody bothers with the poor.

Ոչ տուն ունեմ դուռը վրէն, ոչ էլ թոնիր խուփը վրէն:
I have no house with a door on it, and no toneer with a lid*
on it.
[i.e., I am very poor.]

Աղքատին հացն ուտողը չի կշտանար:

You cannot satisfy your hunger with a poor man's bread.

Աղքատի ունեցածը հարուստի որսն է:

The poor man's possessions are the rich man's prey.

Թէ ունիս, իմը դուն ես, թէ չունիս, իմ դէւը դուն ես:

If you have (money) you are my love, if you don't, you are my dev.*

Պաս պահեմ, պաս պահեմ, ագռաւի մտ՞վ թաթախուեմ:

Should I fast and fast, and then break the fast with crow meat?

[i.e., For the poor, breaking the fasting is not followed by feasting.]

Աղէն բարկանայ, աղէն զիս կը ծեծէ, ես բարկանամ, աղէն զիս կը ծեծէ:

When the boss gets angry, he beats me up; when I get angry, the boss beats me up.

Աստուած աղքատը խնդացնել ուզէ նէ, էչը կորսնցնել, վերջն ալ գտնել կու տայ:

When God wants to make a poor man happy, he makes him lose his donkey, and lets him find it again.

Ունեցողի համար ամէն օր Չատիկ ա:

For the rich every day is Easter.

Հարուստը մեռնի, գեղն երերայ, աղքատը մեռնի, մարդ չիմանայ:

When a rich man dies, the whole village flares; when a poor man dies, no one cares.

Հարուստ մարդը օձ կերաւ, ասին, դեղ ա. աղքատը կերաւ, ասին՝ սո՞ված ա:

When the rich man ate a snake, they said it was a remedy; when the poor man did, they said he was hungry.

Հարստի աղջիկն առնիլն ա դժուար, պահիլը հեշտ ա:
The rich man's daughter is hard to get, but easy to keep.

Կայ: Մինչեւ հարուստը բարակի, աղքատի հոգին դուրս կու
By the time the rich get thinner, the poor have faded away.

Ապրիլ կայ երկաթ է, ապրիլ կայ արծաթ է:
There is life like iron and life like silver.

Թշուառութեան չափն որ անցնի, կ'ըսեն. աղէկ նշան է:
When misery goes too far, some will say it's a good sign.

Մէկին որ փողն աւելնայ, տանը սիւնը ծուռ կ'երեւնայ:
As one gets richer, the pillar of his house seems crooked to him.

Հարուստին աչքը վարագոյրով կ'ըլլայ:
The eyes of the rich are dim.

Հարստի հարստութեան չես կարող հասնիլ, դրացի եղիր
 նրան:
If you cannot attain the rich man's wealth, become his neighbor.

Հարստութիւնը անքուն կրակ է. ունեցողին հանգիստ չի
 տալիս:
Wealth is a fierce fire: it gives its owner no peace.

Հարստութիւնը գէշին կը սիրունացնի, լալին լեզու կը
 տայ, չոլախին ջիւխտ ոտք, քոռին ալ երկու աչք:
Riches give beauty to the ugly, speech to the dumb, feet to the crippled, and two eyes to the blind.

Անուշ քուն կ'ըլլայ, ում կողը տաք է:
You sleep well when your waist is warm.
 [In old times, money was kept in a special belt; hence a warm waist.]

Ով որ փող ունի, խելք չունի. ով որ խելք ունի, փող չունի:
He who has money has no brains; he who has brains has no money.

Ու՞մ խօսքը անցուկ կ'ըլլայ: Հարուստին ու գեղեցիկին:
Who is always listened to? The wealthy and the handsome.

Պզտիկ մարդիկ, մեծ-մեծ երազներ կը տեսնեն:
Small people have great dreams.

Ի՛նչ անեմ ոսկի լազանը (ամանը), որ մէջը արիւն պիտի թքեմ:
What good is a golden basin, if I am to spit blood in it?

Մէկը կը վայելէ, միւսը կը տուժէ
One has the pleasure, the other the pain

Պապին կերածը թոռան ակռան կ'առնէ:
What a grandfather ate, his grandson's teeth will sense.

Ուտողը կերաւ, լպստողը մէջտեղ ընկաւ:
He who ate it, got away; he who licked it, had to pay.

Զին ու ջորին կռուան, էչը ոտատակ գնաց:
The horse and the mule fought; the donkey got underfoot.

Ուժ, բռնութիւն, օրէնք, դատաստան
Power, force, law, judgment

Մեծաւորը որ կամուրջ լինի, վրիցը մի՛ անցկենաւ:
Don't go over the boss, even if he is a bridge.

Թագաւորն էլ թագի լայեղ (արժանի) պիտի:
Even a king should be worthy of his crown.

Օրէնքն հարստի համար է գրած, պատիժն՝ աղքատի:
Law is written for the rich, punishment for the poor.

Իրաւունք կայ, օրէնք չկայ:
There are rights, but no laws.

Դատաւորին աչք չկայ, ականջ կայ:
The judge has no eyes, he has ears.

Դահիճ կայ, որ խիղճ ունի, դատաւոր կայ, խիղճը մեռած:
There are hangmen with souls, and judges with dead souls.

Ո՛վ գողացաւ կարագը, ու՞մ քչեցին մարագը:
Who stole the butter, and who ended up in the gutter?
[Lit.: ..., "who was sent to the hayloft?"]

Զօռը որ տանէն ներս մտնի, դատաստանն երթիքէն կ'ելնի:
When violence enters the house, justice escapes through the skylight.

Սուր մանգաղը քոնն է, ամա հանդը բաժանովի է:
The sharp sickle is yours, but the field is not yours alone.

Մեռելից խարջ չեն ուզի:
They don't ask dues from the dead.

Բանտի քանդածը Աստուած չի քանդի:
What the jail can destroy, God cannot.
[Years in jail can destroy a household.]

Որքան ծռիս, կը բեռնաւորեն
The more you bow, the more they load you

Շարկես, առնող չկայ, արկես՝ առնող չատ:
Carry your load, no one will take it off you; give it away, many will.

Բեռը չափողի չափակին կը դնեն:
They load the burden on those who carry it.

Տաւէն (ուղտ) էլ մեծ է, համա կը չոքեցնեն, բեռ կը դնեն
վրան:
The camel is huge; but they force him on his knees to load him.

Իշին որ խոնարհ տեսնեն, ջուխտ կը նստեն:
When they see that the donkey is humble, two will ride on it.

էշի բեռը քանի ծանր ըլնի, շուտ-շուտ կ'երթայ:
The more you load a donkey, the faster it goes.

Ուղտին ասին. «Աչքդ լոյս, թագաւորը քեզ կանչել ա»,
ասեց. «Ես գիտեմ, եա Կողբ աղի պիտի ղրկի, եա Շարուր բրնձի»:
They told the camel, "Congratulations, the king has called for
you." He said, "I know, he will send me either to Koghb (region) for
salt or to Sharour (region) for rice."

Լուծը քաշող եզան վզին կը դնեն:
They yoke the ox that takes the yoke.

էշն իր սատկիւր կ'ուզի, թաք տիրոջը վնաս տայ:
The donkey would die just to spite his master.

Կռնակ ունենամ, բեռ դնող չա'տ:
If I have a back, many will load me.

Աւելի համբերութիւնը իշի մարտիրոսութիւն է:
Too much patience is a donkey's martyrdom.

Ապահովութիւն Security

Մուլքն (անշարժ գոյք) անմեռ որդի ա:
Immovable goods are (like) an immortal son.

Որտեղ հաց, էնտեղ կաց:

Where you earn your bread, there you make your bed.

[Lit.: Where your bread is, there you stay.]

Որտեղ հաց, էնտեղ կաց. որտեղ գինի, էնտեղ քնի:

Where you earn your bread, there you make your bed; where you drink your wine, there you will recline.

Դո՛վլաթը (հարստութիւնը) մ'լքի միջին ա, մալն հսօր կայ, վաղը չկայ:

Wealth lies in immovable property; movable goods are here today, gone tomorrow.

Մուլքը սիրեկան է:

Immovable goods are sweethearts.

Միրաս (ժառանգութիւն), ուտես ու մուրաս:

Inheritance, you spend it and go from riches to rags.

Միրասը (ժառանգութիւն) կ'ըլլայ մարազ (ախտ):

Inheritance can become a plague.

Ժառանգը տաք ձեռքով կու տան:

Inheritance should be given with warm hands.

[i.e., If you have valuables to pass on, do so while you are
alive.]

**Քեաֆիլ (երաշխաւոր) եղողի ձեռքը միշտ ճեպը պիտի
եղնի:**

The guarantor's hand must always be in his pocket.

Բան չունիս, վկայ եղիր, պարտք չունիս՝ երաշխաւոր:

If you have no occupation, become a witness; if you have no debts, become a guarantor.

**Մալ (ապրանք) ծախողը մէկ տարի կը հարստանայ, մալ
առնողը մէկ տարի կ'աղքատանայ:**

The seller is wealthy for a year, the buyer is poor for a year.

Ամանաթը (ի պահ տրուած առարկայ) տէրը կ'ուզի:
Pawned goods will be sought by the owner.

Մալը կ'երթայ, մալամաթը (թշնամութիւն) կը մնայ:
The fortune goes, the feud stays.

Դրամ, ապրանք, առեւտուր
Money, goods, commerce

Փողը որ կայ, ձեռի կեղտ ա:
Money is dirt on your hands.

Փողը որ կայ, ձեռի կեղտ ա. լուանաս, կ'երթայ:
Money is (like) dirt on your hands; you wash it, it goes away.

Փողը որ կայ, ձեռի աղտ ա, էսօր կայ, էգուց չկայ:
Money is (like) dirt on your hands: here today, gone tomorrow.

Չունես փող, մտի՛ հող:
If you have no money, bury yourself.

Փողը մութ տեղը լոյս կու տայ:
Money lights up a dark place.

Փարէն փրկի չարէն:
Money saves you from evil.

Փողը փոքր Աստուած են անուանէր:
Money is called the "little God."

Փողի տիրոջ խօսքն ամէն տեղ կ'անցնի:
He who has money is listened to.

Հայ կիտի ստակ, բանը կու շինիս իստակ:
Blessed is money, it smoothes things like honey.

Փողը փող կ'աշխատի:
Money makes money.

Ինը տուողը տասն ալ կու տայ:
He who gives nine, will give ten as well.

Փողն ամէնքն են աշխատում, բանը պահելն է:
Many make money; keeping it is the thing.

Փարա եղնի, թէ չէ փարայի տեղ չատ կայ:
The thing is to have money; to spend it, there will be many
ways.

Փարան նեղ օրուայ համար է:
Money is for tight days.

Փող ունեցար աղա ես, փող չունեցար ծառայ ես:
If you have money, you are a sir, if you have none, you are a
servant.

Փարա եղաւ, աշխարհ ձեռքդ կը պագին:
If you have money, the world will kiss your hand.

Փարան լեզու չունեցողի բերանը լեզու կը դնէ:
Money gives a tongue to the mute.

Ճեհէնեմ (դրախտ) ու ճեննէթ (դժողք) տանողը փարան է:
It's money that takes you to heaven or hell.

Փողի կնիքը ճանչցողը, ո՛չ հոգի ունի, ո՛չ հաւատ:
He who knows money's worth has neither soul nor faith.

Ստակ վաստկողին խելքը մէկ, թոփ անողին տասնում էկ:
The money-maker has one brain, the money-saver eleven
brains.

Մարդուս բարեկամը իր գրպանն է:
Your best friend is your pocket.

Փողից սարերն էլ են վախենում:
Even mountains fear money.

Ստակը սարեր կը գրջէ (գլորեր):
Money will overturn mountains.

Առաջ պըլիկ (դրամ), ետքը տնիկ, ետքն ալ կնիկ:
First have money, then a house, and then a spouse.

Փարա չունեցողին կնիկը հարամ է:
He who has no money deserves no wife.

Փողը ձէն է տալիս:
Money talks.

Վերն Աստուած, վարը փարան:
Up in heaven, God; down on earth, money.

Փարա կ'ուզէ՞ս ունենալ քսակդ ծակ մի՛ պահիր:
If you want to be rich, keep your purse out of reach.
[Lit.: ..., don't keep a purse with a hole.]

Նաղդ (կանխիկ) փողը հանած թուր է:
Cash money is a drawn sword.

Առնողը գտնում է, ծախողը՝ կորցնում:
The buyer finds, the seller loses.

Պազարում ապրանքի հետ հոգի էլ է ծախւում:
At the bazaar, along with goods, they also sell souls.

Առուտուրը հէր ու մէր չունի:
Business does not know father or mother.

Առուտուրը էն մարդու մօտից արա, որ հէրը նոր ա
մեռել է աղբոր մօտից, որ նոր ա բաժնուէր
*Buy goods from a merchant whose father has just died; or
from his (merchant's) brother who just split with him.*

Վաճառականն որ աղքատնայ, հին տետրակներն կը բանայ:
When broke, the merchant opens up his old notebooks.
 [In the hope to find some receivables]

Առուտուրը Աստծուն կը վայելի. թանկութիւնն էլ գիտի,
 էժանութիւնն էլ:
*It's God who is suited for commerce; He knows what's costly
 and what's cheap.*

Աղբէրութեան ասէն աղբօր պէս, առուտուրի ասէն՝
 օտարի պէս:
In brotherhood like brothers, in business like strangers.

Ով արեւտուր չ'անի, ո՛չ կը կորցնի, ո՛չ կը գտնի:
He who doesn't trade, will neither lose nor gain.

Առուտուր են ասել, չեն ասել առ-ու-կուր:
They said "take-and-give"; they didn't say "take-and-swallow."

[Word play based on the Armenian words *առեւտուր* [arevtour] or *առուտուր* [aroutour] for "commerce" which literally means: "take-and-give" and the compressed sentence *առ-ու-կուր* [ar-ou-koul] for "take-and-swallow."]

Մալատիրոջ երդում չի հասնի:
A vendor is not supposed to vow.

Ծախողին մէկ աչքը բաւ է. առնողին հազարն ալ քիչ է:
*For the vendor one eye is enough; for the buyer even a
 thousand won't suffice.*

Առնողին աչքը, ծախողին ձեռքը կ'ըլնի:
The eyes of the buyer are in the hands of the vendor.

Գետնէն ալ ստակ գտնաս նէ, համրէ ու առ:
*Money, even if you find it on the ground, count it first and
 then take it.*

Թռչունը կուտով կը բռնեն, մարդը՝ արծաթով:
Birds are trapped with seeds, people with silver (money).

Ոսկի բեռով ջորւոյն առջեւ ամէն բերդի դռներ բաց են:
To a mule loaded with gold every fortress will open its gates.

Ոսկին մութ տեղ լոյս կու տայ:
Gold casts light in the darkness.

Ոսկին ցեխի մէջ էլ կը փայլի:
Gold will shine even in mud.

Ոսկու արժէքը ոսկերիչը գիտի:
It's the goldsmith who knows what gold is worth.

Առանց խելքի, ունեցուածքը կեանք չունի:
Without brains, wealth won't last.

Արծաթը աղի ջուր ա. ինչքան խմես, կը ծարաւես:
Silver is like salty water: the more you drink, the thirstier you
get.

Քեարն (չա՜) ու վնասը ընկեր են:
Gain and loss are friends. [i.e., Gain and loss go together.]

Զհարէն (թոյն) կծու դարարն է:
It's the bitter loss which is a real poison.

Օգուտ չեղած տեղը անպայման վնաս կայ:
Where there is no gain, there will be loss without fail.

Պարտք, կաշառք, տոկոս
Debt, bribery, interest

Պարտքի դուռը բաց է:
The door of debt is open.

Պարտատիրոջ երեսը սեւ է, լեզուն կարճ:
A debtor's face is blackened with shame, his tongue is tied.
 [i.e., A debtor is always abashed and reticent.]

Սինի:
 Պարտականի պարտքը պէտք է իր կարողութեան չափով
The debtor's borrowings should match his holdings.

Պարտքը կրակէ շապիկ է:
Debt is a burning shirt.

Վատ պարտականէն հող ու մոխիր:
From a bad debtor (you'll get) earth and ash.

Պարտքի տակ մնալն ու քարի տակ մնալը մէկ է:
Being in debt is like being under rocks.

Տանելիս նոքար է, բերելուց աղա:
When he borrows it, he is a servant; when he returns it, he is a
sir.
 [About the behavior of a debtor]

Աղբէրն աղբօրն ասեց. «Առաջ մի հետաքս տէ՛ս, յետոյ
 աչքիս լոյսն ես:»
A brother said to his brother, "First settle my account, then be
the light of my eye."

[In Armenian, "light of my eye" is a metaphoric expression
 for one's favorite person, similar to "apple of my eye" in English.]

Պարտքը որ կայ, տաւի (ուղտ) ձագ է, քանի պահես կը
 մեծանայ:
Debt is (like) a camel's young, the longer you keep it, the
bigger it gets.

Պարտքդ որ հազարի հասաւ, հուտով փիլաւ կեր:
When your debt gets up to a thousand, eat pilaf with*
chicken.
 [Expressing the cynicism of a lost cause]

Պարտքէն չվախեցողն Աստուծոց չի վախենայ:
He who doesn't fear debt, doesn't fear God.

Արի՛ մեղքով, մի՛ գալ պարտքով:
Come with sins, don't come with debts.

Կնկան էրիկը մարդն է, մարդու էրիկը պարտքն է:
The wife's spouse is the man, the man's spouse is his debt.

Պարտքը տալով, մեղքը լալով:
Paying debts, repenting faults.
[Said about people who are late in paying their debts]

Պարտքը լու կը դառնայ, տուն կը մտնի, ուղտ կը դառնայ, չի դուրս գայ:
Debt sneaks into the house like a flea, then turns into a camel and stays.

Կաշառքը դատաւորի աչքը կը քռացնի:
Bribing will blind the eye of the judge.

Կաշառքը ուտողի աչքը կը քռացնի:
Bribing will blind the eye of the bribed.

Լաւ տեղը կաշառք տուր, ներսը գցի. վատ տեղը կաշառք տուր, դուրսը գցի:
If you place the bribe with the right person, it's invested; if you place it with the wrong person, it's wasted.

Կաշառքը մթնում էլ լոյս կը տայ:
Bribery lights up even the darkness.

Կու տայ հազարը, կ'ըլլայ պազարը:
You pay the bill (as a bribe), you get the deal.

Շան բերանը ոսկոր գցես, կը սըսկուի (լռել):
Throw a bone into a dog's mouth and it shuts up.
[About the efficiency of bribery]

Տուեց ոսկին, բերեց խօսքին:

He gave the gold, they did as they were told.

Սրբի դուռն էլ առանց խուսկ ու մոմի չեն գնում:

Even to the saints you don't go without candle and incense.

Ցամաք գդալը բերանը չեն տանի:

You don't raise an empty spoon to your mouth.

**Սուղ, աժան
Expensive, cheap**

Սուղէն աժանը չկայ:

Nothing is cheaper than the costly.

Թանգ բարին ստակը յետ կը բերէ:

Costly goods will bring back your money.

Հժան մսի խաշուն (արգանակ) չունը չի կերեր:

The broth of cheap meat even the dog wouldn't eat.

Թանգ ծախողը, հժան փնտռողը, գլուխը բաց կը մնայ:

He who asks high prices and he who seeks low prices will both go bare-headed.

Աժան բեքմեզը (ռուփ) մեղրէն անուշ է:

The cheap bekmez is sweeter than honey.*

Զրի քացախը մեղրէն անուշ է:

Free vinegar is sweeter than honey.

Էլը որ խիարի (վարունգ) գինով առնես, մէկ օր ջրի մէջ խեղդուած կը տեսնես:

If you buy a donkey for the price of a cucumber, one day you will find it drowned.

Էժան վախտը առնողի մէջը, թանգ վախտը ծախողի
մէջը խղճմտանք չկայ:

*He who buys when too cheap and sells when too costly has no
heart.*

Աժան բանը թանգ կը լմննայ, թանգը՝ աժան:

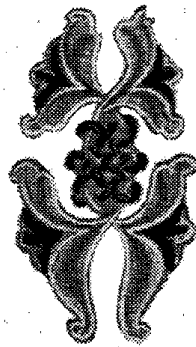
Cheap things end up expensive, and the expensive cheap.

Հարուստ չեմ, որ աժան բան գնեմ:

I am not rich enough to buy cheap things.

XI

Կեանքէ հանած դասեր *Lessons from Life*



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**Ամէն բան իր տեղն ունի
Everything has its place**

Աղօթքն իր տեղը, թուրն իր տեղը:
A prayer in its place, a sword in its place.

Ամէն խօսք իր տեղն ունի:
Every word has its place.

Սարին անհոտ ծաղիկն էլ իրան տեղը վարդի հետ չի փոխի:
Even the odorless flower on the mountain would not change places with the rose in the garden.

Տեղ կայ աղչելիք, տեղ կա փախչելիք:
There are places where you pray, from others you run away.

Արեւն իրա լոյսն ունի, լուսնեակն էլ իրանը:
The sun and the moon each have their own light.

Օձն ամէն տեղ կուռ կը քալէ, իր բունը չիտակ:
The serpent goes everywhere bent, but enters his hole straight.

**Ամէն բան իր չափն ունի
Everything has its limit**

Արջը ձագը չատ սիրելուն սխմրտեր խեղդեր է:
Out of love, the bear hugged its cubs to death.

Թելն որ բարակնայ, կը կտրի:
When the thread becomes thinner, it breaks.

Շատ ծիծաղը լաց կը բերէ:
Too much laughter brings tears.

Շաքարն անուշ ա, համա ամէն օր չի ուտուի:
Sugar is sweet, but you cannot eat it everyday.

Շատ մի՛ սիրի ատել կայ, չատ մի՛ ատի սիրել կայ:
Do not love too much, hate can grip you; do not hate too much, love can grip you.

Գառնով փլաւն էլ ամէն օր ուտել չի ըլլում:
Even pilaf* with lamb you cannot eat everyday.

Ուշ արի, նուշ արի:
Come rarely, but dearly.

Հաւը դադի (սադի) հաւկիթ ածէ, կը պատռի:
If a hen lays a goose egg, she will rupture.

Կատուին փախածը, երդին մարադը:
What a cat has fled, is no further than the shed.

Ամէն ինչ իր ընելու ձեւը ունի
There is a proper way of doing things

Ծիտն ա ծառին գտնում, ոչ թէ ծառը ծտին:
It's the bird that finds the tree, not the tree the bird.

Դանակը կովին մօտ կը տանին, կովը դանակին մօտ չեն տանիր:
You take the knife to the cow, not the cow to the knife.

Մեղրը մատով, կակալը (ընկոյզ) հատով:
Honey with the finger, walnuts one-by-one.

Ամէն բան իր ժամանակին
Everything in its time

Մարդս ժամանակին ա մնում, ժամանակը մարդու չի մնում:
One depends on time, time depends on no one.

Ամէն բան իր ժամանակն ունի:
Everything has its time.

Ամէն բանի ժամանակը կայ:
There is a time for everything.

Վախտը վախտին, թէ չէ ժամանակը անց է կենում:
Everything in its time, for time passes.

Ամէն բան վախտին կը նայի, վախտը բանի չի նայի:
Everything depends on time, time depends on nothing.

Ծառը ժամանակին պէտք է տնկես:
The tree must be planted at the right time.

Երկաթը տաք-տաք կը ծեծեն:
Strike while the iron is hot.

Թոնիրը տաք-տաք հացը կողը կը տան:
Slap the lavash on the sides of the toneer* while it is hot.*
[Lavash* dough is rolled out and pressed against the hot walls
of the toneer*.]

Կռուի օր կռիւ, հաշտութեան օր հաշտութիւն:
In wartime war, in peacetime peace.

Աքլորը, որ անժամանակ կանչէ, գլուխը կը կտրեն:
If the rooster crows out of time, they slaughter it.

Կարմիր ձուն Զատիկին կը սազի:
The red eggs are for Easter.

Ժամանակն մի անգին խաղնա (գանձարան) ա, գինը
իմացողին համար:
Time is a priceless treasure for those who know its worth.

Գառը գարնանը, ձիւնը ձմռանը:
The lamb in spring, the snow in winter.

Տղէն չելած, անունը Շատարեւ կը դնեն:

They call the child "Shatarev" [lit.: "much sun," a male name] before it is born.

[On "wishful thinking." Based on the premature excitement over the eventual birth of a male offspring.]

Բանը էգուցուայ մնաց, իմացի՛ր՝ կորաւ գնաց:

What's postponed until tomorrow is lost forever.

Վախտը դայ նէ, քարէ տանձը կը հասուննայ:

With time, the stone-hard pear will ripen.

Էսօրուայ բանը չեն թողայ էգուցուայ:

Don't put off today's work for tomorrow.

Սահաթ սահաթին սաղ չի դայ:

One hour does not match another hour.

Մինչեւ գարուն չգայ, ծառը չի ծաղկի:

Before spring, no tree will bloom.

Առանց ամառի պտուղ չի հասնի:

Before summer, no fruit will ripen.

Ձմեռ չեկած, ձիւն չի դար:

Before winter, no snow will fall.

Օրը կու դայ, բարին հետը:

The day will come and the goodness with it.

*Երբեմն չատ ուշ է
Sometimes it is too late*

Գնա մեռի՛ր, եկու՛ր սիրեմ:

Go and die, come back and I will love you.

Մինչեւ գլխուս կապելը սորվեցայ, հրիկս գնաց:

By the time I learned how to tie my kerchief, my husband left me.

Քանի կար, տուն չկար, որ մեռաւ, գմբէթ շինեցին:

While alive, he had no home; when he died they built a dome.

Եղները կորչելուց յետոյ գոմը փակեցին:

After the oxen were lost, they closed the stall-doors.

Հարսանիքից յետոյ, դափ ու զուռնա:

After the wedding, (there is no use for) clapping and zurna.*

Մինչեւ աղն եկաւ, մատաղը վերջացաւ:

By the time the salt arrived, the matagh was finished.*

Մինչև առուի ջուրը գայ, գորտի աչքը դուրս կը գայ:

By the time the water fills the pond, the frog has gone to the great beyond.

Յետ Զատիկին, հալւան էժանագին:

After Easter, the halva is cheap.*

[Halva is part of Easter's festive meals.]*

Անցեալն անդարձ է

The past is irreversible

Եղած բանին «չնորհաւոր» կ'ասեն:

*If something is over and done with, you say "Congratulations!"
[i.e., What you cannot change, you accept.]*

Անցուկը մոռցուկ կ'ըլլայ:

It's over, it's forgotten.

Եղածն եղած է:

What happened, happened.

Անցկացածը ետ չի գալ:
The past does not come back.

Անցկացած բանին մի՛ ափսոսա:
Do not feel sorry for what has passed.

Քաշած (նետած) քարը ետ չի դառնար:
Once a stone is tossed, it will not return.

Մեխի (գամ) դարկած տեղը միշտ կ'երեւայ:
Where a nail was driven, there will always be a hole.

Առանց պատճառի հետեւանք չկայ
There is no consequence without a cause

Չուրի (մինչեւ) շանը չզարնես, չի խածի:
A dog won't bite you if you don't hit it.

Առանց կրակի ծուխ չի լինի:
There is no smoke without fire.

Կայծից հրդեհ կը լինի:
A spark can cause fire.

Քամի չելած, տերեւ չի շարժիր:
Without the wind, no leaf will move.

Գծին չխփես, ձէն չի տայ:
If you don't hit a fool, he won't make noise.

Խի՞ (ինչո՞ւ) լողամ, որ խի՞ դողամ:
Why should I swim if I am to shiver?

Սխառւորով բերանը կը մրմռայ:
If you eat an onion, your mouth will burn.

Առիթը պէտք է օգտագործել
Opportunities must be taken

Ֆրսանդը (առիթը) փողով չի առնուի:
Opportunities cannot be bought.

Ցալաքը եղած ժամանակը պիտի բռնես:
Seize good fortune when the time comes.

Կատուները դուրս գնացին, մկները շուրջպար բռնեցին:
The cats are away, the mice do the roundelay.

Գերանը ձեռքից բաց է թողել, մազն է բռնում:
He let go of the beam, and now holds on to the hair.

Թողել է բաց դուռը, դէմ առել փակած դռանը:
Ignoring the open door, he is forcing the locked door.

Շունը չան էտելն ընկաւ, եղոտ հացը կատուին մնաց:
While one dog chased another, the cat got the buttered bread.

Ռեհանը թողած, եոնջայ (առուոյտ) էս ուտում:
You leave the sweet basil and eat the clover.

Ղուլը (թռչունը) որ թռաւ, էլ ձեռդ չի գալ:
Once the bird has flown away, it will never come back.

Բնական ընթացքը դժուար է չեղել
It's hard to change the natural course of things

Ջուրը իրա ճամբէն կը գտնի:
Water finds its way.

Ջուրն իրա ճամբէն գիտի:
Water knows its way.

Ջուրն իր փոսը գիտի:
Water knows its ditch.

Ջուրը կ'երթայ, աւազը կը մնայ:
The water goes, the sand stays.

Ջուրն իր գնացած տեղովն էլի կ'երթայ:
Water follows its usual route.

Ջուրը պատիցը վերեւ չեն տանի:
You cannot make water flow up a wall.

Ծաղիկը ծաղկած ծառիցը կը թափի:
A blossom falls from the tree where it bloomed.

Ծաղիկն իր թփի տակին կը թափի:
A flower falls under its own bush.

Խոնկը ծխողի ետեւ կ'երթայ:
Incense follows the one who burns it.

Ծառ լինի՞ որ քամի չդպչի:
Is there a tree that is not shaken by the wind?

Ծառն իր տակին ա շուաք անում:
A tree makes a shadow under itself.

Սերմը հողի տակ պէտք է մնայ, որ կանաչի:
The seed must stay under the earth to sprout.

Առանց աքլորի էլ լոյսը կը բացուի:
The sun will rise whether the rooster crows or not.

Ջուրը մի տեղ որ շատ մնայ, կը հոտի:
Still water becomes stagnant water.

ԳԷՂԷՆ ԳԷՂԸ ԿԱՅ

Things can get worse than they were

Մինչեւ չգայ վերջինը, չի յիշուի առաջինը:

Unless you see the successor, you cannot value the predecessor.

Գլուխդ որ ցաւի, ոտիդ ցաւը մտէդ կը գցես:

When you get a headache, you forget your sore foot.

Աղբիւրները չչորցած, ջրին արժէքը չի գիտցուիր:

One never appreciates the water until the wells run dry.

Տնիցդ որ երթաս, նոր տանդ յարգը կ'իմանաս:

After you have left your home, you will you know its worth.

Կերթաս առնանցդ, կը յիշես մարանցդ:

When you go to your husband's home, you'll yearn for your mother's home.

Հենց տարտ տամ, որ տարտդ մոռանաս:

Let me give you such a worry that you forget the one you have.

Գործն իր արդիւնքով կը գնահատուի

Everything is appreciated by its results

Ամէն բանի վերջն է գովելի:

It's always the outcome that counts.

Ճուտերը աչնանը կը հաշուեն:

They count the chicks in the fall.

Կէ՛ր, յետոյ գոհացիր:

Eat, and then be content.

Խօսքը ցան փռելը չէ, թօփ անելն է:

It is not the sowing, but the reaping that counts.

Դիւրին վաստակը կայուն չէ
Easy earnings are not lasting

Քամու բերածը քամին կը տանի:
What the wind brings, the wind will carry away.

Սելաւի (ջրհեղեղ) բերածը սելաւը կը տանի:
What the flood brings, the flood will carry away.

էլի բերածը էլը կը տանի:
What was brought by the stranger, the stranger will carry away.

Ջրի բերածը ջուրն էլ կը տանի:
What the water brings, the water will carry away.

Շինելու տեղ եղածն ալ կ'աւրեն
One can destroy instead of repairing

Ունքը շինելու տեղ, աչքն էլ հանեց:
Instead of plucking her eyebrow, she plucked out her eye.

Շունը գնաց դասաբխանէն (մսավաճառ), ոտ չտարաւ, իր ոտը կտրեց:
The dog went to the slaughter house to grab a leg; instead, he broke his own.

Ճանճն հանել իջէն, մուկը ներս ձգեցին:
While chasing the fly out, they let the mouse in.

Քանդելը հեշտ է, շինելը՝ դժուար:
To destroy is easy, to build is hard.

Խաչ հանելն իջէն, աչքս հետը հանեցի:
While crossing myself, I poked out my eye.

*Կերթայ Երեւանէն բրինձ բերելու. կու գայ որ պղղուրը
տնէն են տարէ:*

*He goes to Yerevan for rice; back home, he finds his
bougour* was stolen.*

Ուղտը դնաց կոտոչի, ականջն ալ կորսնցուց:
The camel went in search of horns and lost its ears.

Երեւոյթը կը յաջորդէ նախանշանին
Events follow their signals

Լաւ օրը առաւոտից կ'երեւայ:
You can see it in the morning if the day is to be good.

Ամպի գոռալը անձրեւի նշան է:
Rumbling in the clouds is a sign of rain.

Մինչեւ ամպը չգոռայ, անձրեւ չի գայ:
There is no rain before thunder.

Քամին չփչած ծովը ֆութունա (փոթորիկ) չ'ըլլար:
Without wind there will be no storm at sea.

Գարունը սոխակի թեւով կու գայ:
Spring comes on the wings of the nightingale.

Անձրեւ չեղած տեղը հեղեղ չի անի:
There is no flood without rain.

Լաւին հետ կու գայ նաեւ գէշը
Good and bad come together

Առանց փուշի վարդ չկայ:
There are no roses without thorns.

Վարդ սիրողը փուշն էլ կը սիրի:
He who likes roses must like thorns.

Միան անոսկոր չի լինի:
There is no meat without bones.

Ձուկն առանց փուշի չի լինի:
There is no fish without bones.

Ամէն չամիչ կոթ մը ունի:
Every raisin has a stem.

Որտեղ տանձ կայ, պոչը հետն է:
Where there is a pear, there is a stem.

Տանձը կոթ ունի, մարդը պակասութիւն:
Pears have stems; people, faults.

Յաջողութիւն և ձախորդութիւն եղբայր են:
Fortune and misfortune are brothers.

Ամէն դարիվեր (վերելք) ունի իր դարիվայրը:
Every uphill has a downhill.

Անփուտ (անթերի) լուսնեակն էլ չէ:
Even the moon is not spotless.

Լաւն ու պիտանին չեն կորսուիր
The good and the useful do not perish

Տաշած քարը գետնին չի մնայ:
A polished stone will not remain on the ground.

Ձոդ (մաքուր) ոսկին ժանգ չի բռնի:
Pure gold does not rust.

Ոսկին ցեխին մէջ ալ ոսկի է:
Gold is gold even in mud.

Լաւն ու գէշը գործին մէջ կ'երեւայ
Good and bad are seen at work

Լաւ եզը ըծան տակին կ'երեւայ, լաւ կնիկը՝ օրօրոցի:
A good ox shows in the yoke, a good woman, at the cradle.

Լաւ էշը բեռան տակ կ'երեւայ:
A good donkey is seen under its load.

Սեւն ու սպիտակը բաղնիսումը կ'երեւայ:
Black and white (skin) is seen in the (Turkish) bath.

*Ուղտին քեանտրպազուլթիւնը (լարախաղացուլթիւն) մազէ
կամուրջին վրայ կ'երեւայ:*
*A camel's skill as a tightrope walker is seen when it crosses the
hair-bridge.*

Որոշ բաներ չեն փոխուիր
Some things do not change

Էլի էն ջուրն ա, էլի էն ջաղացը:
It's the same water, the same mill.

Էլի էն սուփրեն (սփրոց), էլի էն հացը:
It's the same tablecloth, the same bread.

Էլի էն սանդն է, էլի էն վարսանդը:
It's the same sand, the same varsang*.*

Էշն էն էշն ա, փալանն ա փոխած:
The donkey is the same, only the saddle has changed.

**Կարեւորը կամենալն է
It is good will that counts**

Հենց բան չկայ, որ մարդ ուզենայ ու չանէ:
There is nothing that you want to do, but you can't do.

Կամենալ կէս ընել է:
Good will is half the job.

**Էականը աննշանին քով կը մոռցուի
The essential is forgotten over the insignificant**

Ուղտը կորցրել ես, լուի՞ն ման կու գաս:
You have lost the camel and you look for the flea?

Աղջկանը կորցրել, ուրունքին սուգն ա անում:
She lost her daughter; she is mourning her pearl.

Էշը կորցրել են, փալանի յետնէն են ման գալի:
He has lost his donkey; he is looking for the saddle.

Էշի տարտը չեմ, նալների տարտն եմ:
I don't care for the lost donkey; I care for his shoes.

Գլուխը կտրեցիր, մօրուքին վրա՞յ կու լաս:
You cut off the head; are you crying for the beard?

**Իւրաքանչիւրին իրեն եղածին համեմատ
Everybody receives according to his worth**

Տախտակի կէօրա մէկս կը զարնեն:
One chooses the nail according to the plank.

Երեսի կէօրա ապտակ կը զարնեն:
They give the slap according to the face.

Հոգը քաշողին, լաթը մաշողին:
Sorrow to those who bear it, clothing to those who wear it.
[God gives to people according to their disposition.]

Աստուած սարը կը տեսնի՝ ձուռնը կը դնէ:
God sees the mountain and sets the snow.

Աստուած ամէն մարդու սրտի համեմատ կու տայ:
God gives everybody according to his heart.

Ատանկ շան, ատանկ շարական:
For such a dog, such a hymn.

Ան պատին ան ծեփը կը բաւէ:
For that wall, that plaster is enough.

Տաղին ի՞նչ պէտք է ոսկի սանտր:
What is a golden comb to a bald head?

Տամարի (երակ) գէօրայ արիւն կ'առնեն:
They take blood according to the vein.

Ապրողին ապրանք, մեռնողին պատանք:
To the living the goods, to the dead the shrouds.

Մնածին օրոցք, մեռածին ճաղք (դագաղ):
For the newborn the cradle, for the dead the coffin.

Ուղտին գդալով չեն ջրի:
You can't give water to a camel with a spoon.

Սուրբին աղօթք ընելով կը խաբեն, շան՝ ոսկորով:
They trick a saint with prayer and a dog with a bone.

Որոշ բաներ անկարելի են
Some things are impossible

Անջուր ջաղացը ալուր չի աղաց:
A waterless mill will not grind flour.

Գէլի հետ աղբէրութիւն չի արուի:
You can't live in brotherhood with the wolf.

Ցամքած աղբիւրից ջուր չեն ուզի:
Don't expect water from a dry well.

Գաթան ծոցը պաս (պահք) բռնել կ'ըլլա՞յ մի:
Can you fast with a gata in your pocket?*

Առանց շան գեղ չի լինի:
There is no village without dogs.

Հաւկիթը իր ծայրի վրայ չի կանգնի:
An egg will not stand on its end.

Լուր մը համար եորդանը (վերմակ) չեն այրեր:
You don't burn a blanket because of a flea.

Մուկը բռնելու համար տունը կրակի չեն տա:
You don't set fire to a house to catch a mouse.

Առիւծը ճանճ չի բռներ:
A lion does not catch flies.

Ծակ թաւայով ձուածեղ չի լինի:
You cannot make an omelette in a leaky pan.

Ձամբորդն անհաց չ'եղնի, հովիւն անկրակ:
*No wanderer can be without food, and no shepherd without
fire.*

Ծակ կճուճը ջուր չի պահեր:
A leaky jar cannot hold water.

Ծուռ քանոնից չիտակ գիծ չի դուրս գալ:
You can't draw a straight line with a crooked ruler.

Ճրագը անձէթ չի վառի:
No oil lamp will burn without oil.

Ճրագն առանց պատրոյգի լոյս չի տալ:
No oil lamp will shed light without a wick.

Մէկ կուկուռով գարուն չի գալ:
One cuckoo doesn't make the spring.

Մէկ ոչխարին երկու կաշի չ'ըլլար:
One cannot get two skins from one sheep.

Մէկ քարով պատ չի կայնիր:
A wall cannot be built with one stone.

Պզին ծայրին բռնցքով զարնել չ'ըլլար:
You cannot pound your fist on the point of a pike.

Սոխի անուշը չի լինի:
There are no sweet onions.

Ասեղով հոր չեն փորեր:
You can't dig a well with a needle.

Մուկը ծակը չէր կարողանում մտնել, ցախաւելն էլ պոչից կապեցին:

The mouse could barely squeeze into the hole; they attached a broom to its tail.

[Said when someone overburdened takes on even more tasks.]

Աղուէսը հաւաքնին դարավու՞լ (պահակ):
Can a fox guard a chicken coop?

Գառը գիլին պահ տուին:
They entrusted the lamb to the wolf.

Որոշ բաներ անվերականգնելի են
Some things are irreparable

Կիսած հացը չի սաղանայ:
The bread cut in half cannot become whole.

Կոտրած ձուկն և կիսած հացը չեն սաղանայ:
A broken egg and a halved loaf cannot be fixed.

Ելած աչքը տեղը չի դադ:
An eye out of its socket cannot be put back.

Գետին թափած եղ, էլ չի լցուի իր տեղ:
The oil, if spilled, cannot be refilled.

Սիրտը որ կայ, շուշայ է, որ կոտրուեց, էլ չի սաղանայ:
A heart is made of glass; once broken, it cannot be put back together.

Անձամբ ըրածին դարման չկայ:
There is no cure to what you have done to yourself.

Լալով, ողբալով մեռելը չողջնար:
Crying and lamenting won't revive the dead.

Չարիքին պատճառը իրեն խորքին մէջ է
The cause of evil lies in its depth

Չուկը գլխէն կը հոտի, ջուրը ակէն կը պղտորի:
A fish starts rotting from its head; water gets muddy at its source.

Ձուկը գլխէն կը հոտի:

A fish starts rotting from its head.

Աղբիւրը ակէն պղտոր է:

The well gets cloudy at its source.

Ծառը քոքէն է հա՛մ չորանում, հա՛մ դալարում:

It's the roots that make the tree both dry out or sprout.

Ծառին ծուռ բունիլը քոքան ա լինում:

It's the roots that make the tree grow crooked.

Ծառը քոքիցն ա փտում:

A tree starts decaying at its roots.

Չնչինի ազդեցութիւնն ալ չնչին է

The impact of the insignificant will be insignificant

Ճանճն ի՛նչ ա, որ ճենճն (կեղտ) ի՛նչ լինի:

What's a fly, to fear its filth?

Ծիւղը ի՛նչ ա, որ եղը ի՛նչ լինի:

What's a bird, to expect lard from it?

Ծիւղը ի՛նչ ա, որ ճուղը ի՛նչ լինի:

What's a bird, to expect a big chick?

Լուն ի՛նչ ա, որ լուի քացին ի՛նչ լինի:

What's a flea, to fear its kick?

Ծիրանն ի՛նչ արաւ, կորիզն ի՛նչ անէ:

What did the apricot do, to expect anything from its pit?

Շունն ի՛նչ, բունն ի՛նչ:

What's a dog, to expect a big dog house?

Ճշմարտութիւնը միշտ ընդունելի չէ
Truth is not always welcome

Դրուստ (ճիշտն) ասողին մի ձի, որ ասի ու փախչի:
He who tells the truth needs a horse to escape afterwards.

Դուզ խօսողի գլուխը ծակ ա:
He who tells the truth has a hole in his head.

Շիտակ ասողը տէր չունի:
He who tells the truth has no protection.

Մինչեւ դորդը (ճշմարիտ) գայ, սուտը աշխարհ կ'ուտէ:
By the time the truth arrives, lies will have eaten up the world.

Որոշ բաներ անխուսափելի են
Some things are inevitable

Աղուէսի փախուստը մինչեւ քիւրքչու (մուշտակալճառ)
 թուքանն (խանութ) է:
The escape of the fox ends at the furrier's shop.

Կուժը ջրի ճամբին կը կոտրի:
The pitcher breaks on the way to the well.

Խոզին ինչքան պատիւ անես, վերջը դանակն ա նրա ջանը:
However you honor a pig, its final fate is the knife.

Կուժը կուժին զարնես, եա մէկը պիտի կոտրուի, եա
 մէկէլը:
If you hit one pitcher with another, either one or the other will break.

Արծիւը ինչքան էլ որ վեր բարձրանայ, վերջը էլի
 քարին կը նստի:
However high the eagle flies, he will land on a stone.

Գալլին բերնէն ոչխար չ'ազատիր:
You can't rescue a sheep from a wolf's jaws.

Իշի գերեզմանը գիլի փորն ա:
The donkey's grave is the wolf's stomach.

Լաւ լողնորդը վերջը ջրի փայ (բաժին) կ'ըլնի:
A good swimmer will finally become the sea's prey.

Ոտը կոտրած իշին վերջի տէրը գալն է:
The last owner of a limping donkey is the wolf.

Սոված կատուի ձեռիցը մուկը չի պրծնի:
A mouse cannot escape a hungry cat.

Համրած ոչխարը գէլը չի՞ ուտի:
Does the wolf not eat the counted sheep anyway?

Հազուադիւտ բաները յարգի են
Rare things are valuable

Կոյրերի թագաւորութեան մէջ մի աչքանին թագաւոր է:
In the kingdom of the blind, the one-eyed is a king.

Էշ չեղած տեղը չալակով ջաղաց գնալը ամօթ չի:
Where there are no donkeys, it is no shame to carry a load to the mill on one's back.

Գեղը տղամարդ չկար, խորոզի անունն էին դրել
Ղարա-Մահմադ:
For want of men in the village, they called the rooster Kara-Mahmad.

Զի չեղած տեղը էշն էլ մեծ գին ունի:
Where there are no horses, even the donkey is high-priced.

Աղ չեղած վախտը ոչխարը լեզուն քարերին ա քսում:
Where there is no salt, the sheep licks the rocks.

Իրերը տարբեր նպատակներու կրնան ծառայել
Things can be used for different purposes

Դանակ կայ, մարդ կը մորթէ, դանակ կայ, հաց կը քերթէ:
Some knives cut a head, others cut bread.

Մէկ ծաղկէն օձը թոյն կը շինէ, մեղուն՝ մեղր:
From the same flower the serpent draws its poison and the bee its honey.

Կորածին արժէքը մեծ կ'ըլլայ
Lost things are priceless

Զրոնած ձուկը մեծ կ'ըլլայ:
A fish that got away is always big.

Կոտրած ամանը գին չ'ունենար:
A broken dish is priceless.

Կորած մազը պարան կը դառնայ:
A lost hair becomes a rope.

Կորած պարանը երկար կը լինի:
A lost rope is always long.

Շատը միշտ չէ, որ լաւ է
More is not always better

Օխտը հարսի եփած փափէն (ալիւրապուր) աղի կ'ըլնի:
If seven women cook the papa, it will be too salty.*

**Օխտը վարդապետ մի աղջիկ կնքեցին, անունը դրին
Կիրակոս:**

*Seven priests baptized a girl and gave her the name Kirakos
(a male name).*

Էն գեղը, որ չատ խորոզ կայ, գիշերը չի լուսնայ:
Where there are too many roosters, there will be no dawn.

**Մէկ տուն երկու տանտիկին ըլնի, տախտն անաւել կը
մնայ:**

If two women command a house, the floor will not get swept.

XII

Այբբենական յաւելում *Alphabetical Appendix*

(Proverbs which did not fit into any heading)



Աւերորդը շուներուն կու տան:

Unwanted things you give to the dogs.

[i.e., Giving away something which you do not need is not truly giving.]

Ալուրս մաղեցի, մաղս կախեցի:

I sifted my flour; I hung up my sieve.

[Said by people who consider their duties fulfilled.]

Անմուրազատու սրբին խունկ ու մոմ տանող չի լինի:

To an unresponsive saint nobody will bring incense and candle.

**Ա՛խ ժամանակ, ժամանակ. այս ի՛նչ օրերու հասանք.
նժոյգները յարդ կ'ուտեն, դարին կ'ուտէ աւանակ:**

O time! O time! Where have we arrived? The horse eats straw and the ass eats oats.

Աղէկ լողուոր, ձկան փորն է:

A good swimmer ends up in the fish's stomach.

Ամէն բան իր գինն ունի:

Everything has its price.

Ամէն բանի սկիզբն է դժուար:

Everything is difficult at the start.

Ամէն Երուսաղէմ գնացող Հաջի չ'ըլլար:

Not everybody who goes to Jerusalem becomes a Hadji.*

Ամէնուն յոգնած տեղը խան չի շինուիր:

You cannot build a shelter wherever you get tired.

Այնպէս կը սիրեմ, որչափ աչքիս մուխը կամ փոշին:

I like him as much as the smoke in my eyes.

Աշխարհում եա լուծ պիտի լինես, եա՛ եղ:
In this world, you will be either the yoke or the ox.

Աչքը տեսնի, սիրտը կ'ուզէ:
What the eye sees, the heart desires.

Առաջ փախչողին կը բռնեն:
They catch first the ones who flee.

Առանց իշի գլխի հարսանիք չի լինի:
There can be no wedding without a donkey's head.
 [i.e., Used when a person is indispensable.]

Բաց բերանը ճանճ կը մտնի:
An open mouth captures flies.

Բեռին տակ էչը չի զռար:
The ass does not bray when loaded.

Բոցման թոնիրը հաց չի թխեր:
You cannot bake bread in a burning toneer.*

Գայլը արիւնով է հարբում:
The wolf gets drunk on blood.

Գայլին ինչքան շուտ սպաննես, էնքան քիչ վնաս կը քաշես:
The sooner you kill the wolf, the less harm you will know.

Գդալից մինչեւ բերան շատ ճամբայ կայ:
From the spoon to the mouth is a long way.

Գէշ խապարը թէզ (շուտ) տեղ կը հասնի:
Bad news will reach you fast.

Գէշ տանտէրը, քիրաճիին տանտէր կ'ընէ:
A bad landlord will make the tenant a landlord.

Գլորուող քարը հիմք չի բռնէր:
A rolling stone cannot take root.

Գողը լուսնեակի թշնամի է:
The moon is a thief's enemy.

Գոմը քնել է, Սուրբ Գէորգը երազը կը տեսնէ:
He sleeps in the stall, but dreams of Saint George.

Գովեցին խանութը, քաքեց փոխանութը:
They praised the lady, she shat in her pants [i.e., out of joy].

Դանակը ոսկորին է հասեր:
The knife has reached the bone.
 [i.e., Patience has run out.]

Դատարկ տաշտին դող չի գնայ:
No thief would go near an empty kneading-trough.

Դէւը դարբնոցը չի գնայ:
The dev does not go to the blacksmith's.*
 [According to the folk belief, devs* feared fire. Said by people who, as a rule, refuse to go certain places.]

Եա աղն ա պակաս, եա մաղը:
He lacks either salt or a sieve.
 [Refers to a person who approaches others only when he/she needs something.]

Երթալ կայ, չգալ կայ. գալ կայ, չգտնալ կայ:
You can leave and not return; you can return and not find.
 [Said when people bid farewell without knowing when they will meet again.]

Երկաթ ծամելու համար, պողպատէ ակռաներ պէտք է ունենար:

To chew iron you need teeth of steel.

Երկինքէն է իջեր, ոտքերն ամպոտ են:

He came down from heaven; his feet are cloudy.

[About absent-minded people.]

Էլը հեծեր, էլ կը փնտռէ:

While riding the donkey, he is searching for it.

Էլը ցեխումը մնաց, տիրոջից ուժովը չկար, որ հանի:

The donkey got stuck in the mud; there was nobody stronger than his master to pull him out.

Էլը գիտէ, որու երեսին կը զռայ:

The donkey knows in whose face to roar.

Էլը մատաղ չի լինի, էլագինը հո կ'ըլնի:

The donkey cannot become a matagh, but its selling price can.*

Էռջինը հողը, վերջինը ճողը (ճիւղը):

The first gets the land, the last gets the branch of a plant.

[i.e., The firstcomer benefits.]

Էս խմորը շատ ջուր կը վերցնի:

This dough will absorb lots of water.

[i.e., This problem needs a lot of time and effort to be solved.]

Էսօր ինձ, էգուց քեզ:

Today (it happens) to me; tomorrow, to you.

Էրիկ կ'ուզեմ, հիմա կ'ուզեմ:

I want a husband, and I want him now.

[Said about impatient people]

Թաժա աւելլը լաւ կ'աւլէ:

New brooms sweep clean.

Թացը չորի հետ չեն վառի:

One should not burn the wet with the dry.

Ժամէն (եկեղեցի) ես կու գամ, քարոզ դու՞ն կու տաս:

I am coming from the church, you are doing the preaching?

Իչին ասին, մարիֆաթդ ի՞նչ ա, պոչը տնկեց ու դռաց:

They asked the donkey, "What is your talent?" He stretched his tail and roared.

Իչուն վրայէն ընկնողը մեռաւ, ձիուն վրայէն ընկնողը չմեռաւ:

He who fell from the donkey died; he who fell from the horse survived.

Իրիկուան լացիկ, խլիսուան (լուսաբաց) ծաղրիկ:

What is lamented at night, will be laughed at in sunlight.

Լաւ գառը մատաղացուի համար է:

A good lamb is for matagh.*

Լուն տաւա (ուղտ) կը չինէ:

He is making a camel out of a flea.

Լուս լուսանայ, տէրը քաղցրանայ:

After dawn, the owner will calm down.

[Said about a seller's tendency to mull over an offer during the night, before agreeing next morning.]

Խաչին տէրը զօրաւոր կ'ընէ:

It's the bearer who makes the cross powerful.

Խարբերդու անցածը Բալու կը կարդայ:
Staying in Palou, he knows all that goes on in Kharpert
(distant Armenian towns).

Խելք ու տարտ չունեցողը երկար կ'ապրի:
He who has neither brain nor worries, will live long.

Խէրը կ'ընէ, խիարն ալ հետը:
He does the favor, but the disfavor with it.

Խղդուածին տանը չուանի անունն չեն տայ:
Don't mention the word "rope" in the house of the strangled.

Խոզից ո'չ մատաղ կը լինի, ո'չ մածուն:
From a pig you can make neither matagh nor madzoun*.*
[Said about people who are good for nothing.]

Խորովածը չկերանք, ծխից քոռացանք:
We didn't eat the kebob, but the smoke ate up our eyes.*

Խոնկը խաչին կը վայլէ:
The incense suits the cross.
[i.e., Some things belong together]

Միտը ցորեն տեսնալիս ականաթը (թակարդ) աչքը չի
դալիս:

When a bird sees the grain, it forgets the trap.

Մովից գդալ-գդալ տանելով, ջուրը չի պակսի:
You cannot drain the sea with a spoon.

Մովն ընկնողը անձրեւէն չի վախնար:
He who has fallen in the sea will not fear the rain.

Կակուղ երես հրեշտակին սատանէն թէզ-թէզ վրայ կը
տայ:

A timid angel will be swiftly taken over by a devil.

Կատղած շան դեղն սպանելն ա:
The best cure for a mad dog is killing it.

Կատուի խաղը մկան մահն է:
The cat's game is the mouse's death.

**Կարո՞ղ է վարդը ծովի միջում, մանիշակը կրակին առջին
դիմանալ:**
Can the rose survive in the sea and the violet by the fire?

Կուժ կոտորողն էլ մէկ ա, ջուր բերողն էր:
*He who carries the jug, and he who breaks it, are both the
same person.*

Կուժ չինող շատ, կոթ դնող քիչ:
There are many who make a jug, few who put a handle on it.

Կրակի վրայ եղ չեն լցնի:
Do not pour oil on the fire.

Հաղարից մէկ Զատիկ, էն էլ Նաւակատիք:
*Once in a blue moon Easter comes, and here comes also
Navakatik*.*

[Used when a happy occasion is spoiled by something
unpleasant.]

Համտէ՛ս, համտէ՛ս - տակը տէ՛ս:
Taste it, taste it, until you waste it.
[Lit.: ..., "until you see the bottom".]

Հանգիստ ջուրը, հանդարտ գետը կը փորէ զքենարները:
Still waters and calm rivers consume borders.

Հաչել չգիտցող շունը, վրան գայլ կը բերէ:
Dogs that don't bark will bring wolves upon them.

Հարիսէն, կտրէ դսէն:
Harissa, cut the talk short.*
 [Used when a conversation must be stopped short.]

Հացի թանկութիւն, մահի էժանութիւն:
Bread is expensive, death is cheap.

Հաւը իր առջի ածած հաւկթին վրայ կը խնդայ:
The hen is laughing at the egg it just laid.

Հաւը կուտին կը վազի:
The hen runs to the grain.

Հեռանալ կայ, մոռանալ չկայ:
You may leave, but you don't forget.

Հեռու կաց, քաղցր կաց. որ մօտեցար, կը դառնանաս:
Stay afar and stay sweet; if you come close, you'll turn bitter
 [i.e. unwanted].

Հորթը որ կովէն առաջ անցնի, գայլը կ'ուտէ:
The calf that runs ahead of the cow will be eaten by the wolf.

Հօրն ու մօր յարգը չիմացող զաւակը, Աստծու յարգն ի՞նչ
 իմանայ:
*If a child does not appreciate his parents, how can he
 appreciate God?*

Ձեռնոց դնող կատուն մուկ չի բռներ:
A cat that wears gloves cannot catch a mouse.

Ձեռքս բան, ոտքս գերեզման:
My hands at work, my feet in the grave.

Ձիի աքացուն ձին կը դիմանայ:
Only a horse can endure a horse's kick.

Ձին ձի անողը տէրն է:
It's the rider who makes the horse be a horse.

**Ձին կը խաղայ, ձիաւորը կը գովեն, թուրը կը կտրէ,
 ձեռքը կը գովեն:**
*The horse performs, they praise the rider; the sword cuts, they
 praise the hand.*

Ձուկը գլխից պիտի բռնես, որ չփախչի:
Grab the fish by its head, so it doesn't escape.

Ձուկն ի ծովին, տապակը կը դնէ ի կրակին:
While the fish is in the water, he puts the pan on the fire.

Ճանճը առիւծին ականջը կը մտնէ, կը յաղթէ:
The fly enters the ear of the lion and conquers him.

Ճանճը ճենճին կը վազէ:
A fly will fly to filth.

Ճիկար բերողը միս էլ կը բերէ:
He who brings liver will bring meat as well.

**Մախաթը մաշի, ասեղի չափ կը մնայ, ասեղը մաշի, ի՞նչ
 կը մնայ:**

*When a packing-needle wears out, there is still a needle left;
 when a needle wears out, what's left?*

[A packing-needle is a large needle used to sew and repair
 sacks.]

Մահլի ոսկորը, մահլի շանը կը հասնի:
The neighborhood's bones are for the neighborhood's dogs.

*Մայրը մանուկն ուրացել է:
The mother renounced her child.*

[Used in chaotic situations. Originated in the turbulent times in Armenian history when mothers had to abandon their children.]

*Մատանիքին չեն տայ, մատին կը տան:
They don't reward the ring, they reward the finger.*

*Մարդ բան ունենայ անի, որ չունենայ՝ մեռնի:
One should have work to do; if not, he's better to die.*

*Մարդու մալը որ կորաւ, հոգին էլ կը կորի:
When someone's goods are lost, his soul is also lost.*

*Մարիֆաթը (չնորհք) պազարը (չուկայ) չեն ծախեր:
They don't sell talent on the market.*

*Մասխարէն մարդ չի սպանի:
Mocking will not kill anybody.*

*Մեծ գետի ճամբէն մեծ կ'եղնի:
Big rivers have big passages.*

*Մեծ ծովին մէջ մեծ ձուկ կ'ըլլի:
In big waters there are big fish.*

*Մեչան (անտառ) քիչ տանողն է պարպել:
He who took "little-by-little" emptied the forest.*

*Մեռելի տեղն էլ մի քիչ լէն պիտի լինի:
Even the dead need a wider space.*

*Մէկ աչքն մէկաւրին չի հաւատար:
One eye does not trust the other.
[There is no trust between people.]*

Մէկ քաղաք մը կ'երթաս, կը տեսնաս որ գտակները ծուռ են դրեր, դուն ալ դիր:

If you see people in a town wearing their hats on one side, wear yours likewise.

Մէկ եմ ու բեկ եմ:

I'm one, but unique.

Մի գլխին մի աչքը հերիք է, երկուսը շնորհքի համար է:

For a head, one eye is enough; two eyes are just for the looks.

Մի ձեռը որ չեն կտրա կտրել, կը պաչեն գլխին կը տանեն:

If they cannot cut off a hand, they kiss it and press it to their forehead.

Մի չէ-ն փրկէ ամէն չարէն:

A "no" saves you from any blow.

Մինչեւ չքանդուի, չի շինուի:

It's got to be destroyed before it is built.

Մկան համար կատուիցը մեծ դազան չկայ:

For a mouse there is no bigger beast than a cat.

Մուկը իր ելած ծակը գիտէ:

A mouse knows the hole from which it came.

Մըջման բնի բոլորը բան չի բուսնի:

Around an ant hill nothing will grow.

[Referring to the barrenness around an ant hill, allusion to worthless people.]

Մօրուքը համրեր են:

They have counted the hairs of his beard.

[i.e., They know his weaknesses.]

Յոյսով ապրողը, անյոյս ա մեռեր:

He who lived in hope, died hopeless.

Նա՛ քո մեղրն պիտի, նա՛ քո տըզ:

I don't want your honey, nor do I want your buzzing.

Նամարդի բակումը ո՛չ վարդ կը բուսնի, ո՛չ մանիչակ:

In the brute's garden, neither roses nor violets will grow.

Նեղն ընկած կատուն ասլան կը դառնայ:

A cornered cat will become a lion.

Շան խաղալը խածելն ա:

For the dog, playing means biting.

Շանը ծովը լակելովը, ծովը չ'աղտոտիր:

By lapping its water, a dog will not soil the sea.

Շանը պառկած տեղը փշրանք չի լինի:

Where the dog lies, there will be no crumbs.

Շանը քանի քար գցես, կը հաչի:

The more you stone a dog, the more it barks.

Շատը գնաց, քիչը մնաց:

Much is gone, little is left.

Շունը ո՛չ ինքը կ'ուտէ զխոտն, և ո՛չ գառին կը թողու որ

ուտէ:

The dog won't eat the hay, nor will it allow the lamb to eat it.

Շունը սպանողին քաշ տալ կը տան:

They make the dog's killer drag it away.

Ո՛չ քաղցր եղիր, որ կլուն, ո՛չ դառն եղիր, որ թքուն:
Don't be sweet and swallowed, nor be sour and spurned.

Որ չունը կ'ուզեն սպաննել, կատղած անուն կը հանեն:
When they want to kill a dog, they pronounce him mad.

*Ոչխարին առջեւը խոտ ձգելուն պէս, դմակը կը նայի որ
 գիրացա՞ւ:*
As he hands the grass to the sheep, he checks if its dmak has
 become fatter.*

Ով հաց մը չտայ շանը, մաքի մը կու տայ գիւուն:
He who does not give his dog bread, will give the wolf a lamb.

Ով կը խաղայ, նա կը կաղայ:
He who dances, is bound to limp.

Ոտը դրած տեղը կը չորանայ:
Wherever he steps, it dries out.

*Որ մարդու աչքը բունին մէջը կը խաղայ, անոր փորին
 մէջը սատանայ կայ:*
He whose eyes move in their sockets has the devil in his belly.

*Որչափ գիտես ալ նէ, մէյմը գտակիդ ալ խորհուրդ
 հարցուր:*
Even though you know a lot, take advice from your hat.

Որտեղ բարակի, էնտեղ կտրուի:
Where it gets thin, let it break there.

Ուզողի մի երեսը սեւ, չտուողի՝ երկուսը:
*He who asks (for something) has one shame; he who refuses
 two shames.*

Ուղտ հեծնողը կուզէ-կուզ ման չի գայ:
He who mounts a camel will not become hunch-backed.

Ուղտապանին բարեկամ եղողին դուռը ու խալկինը մեծ պէտք է:

He who has a camel owner for a friend must have a large door and a large kettle.

Ուղտը որ սատկի էլ, կաշին մի իշաբեռ է:

Even when the camel dies, its hide has a price.

[lit. ... "his hide would make enough of a load for a donkey"]

Ուշ գտայ, շուտ կորուսի:

I found it too late, and lost it too soon.

Չախմախն էնտեղ թափ տուր, որտեղ կրակ չկայ:

Light the lighter where there is no fire.

Չամչից հատ-հատ, մեղրից մատ-մատ, չուրի (մինչեւ) հասանք, տեղը դատարկ:

From the honey inch-by-inch, from the raisins one-by-one; by the time we arrived, there was none.

Չամուրը (ցեխը) պառկէ՛, խալիպդ (կաղապարդ) տէ՛ս:

Lie down in the mud and see the impression you leave.

Չարը բարուն հակառակ է:

The good opposes the evil.

Չարչին իրա իշի խասեաթը գիտի:

The merchant knows his donkey's temper.

Չհաւնած քարը աչք կը հանէ:

Even a worthless stone can pierce your eye.

Պատէն ընկնողը, պատէն ընկնողի հալից կը հասկանայ:

He who once fell from a wall knows the pain of others who have fallen.

Պիւր (մէկ) ըլի ու փիւր (ընտիր) ըլի:
Let it be one, but fine.

Պղինձը վար ինկաւ չկոտորուեց, ձէնը վեր ելաւ:
The copper kettle didn't break when it fell, but it made a lot of noise.

Պղտոր ջուրին մէջ ձուկ բռնելը դիւրին է:
It is easy to catch fish in muddy waters.

Զաղացից ես եմ գալիս, դու ես արոտեր:
I am coming from the mill, you are covered with flour.

Ջուր կայ, կամուրջ չկայ. կամուրջ կայ, ջուր չկայ:
There is water, but no bridge; there is a bridge, but no water.

Ջրէն ու քարէն չվախեցողը, Աստուծո՛մէ ալ չի վախնար:
He who doesn't fear water and rock doesn't fear God either.

Ջրի կուժը ջրի ճամբին կը կոտորի:
The water jug will break on its way to the water.

Թազիւ ըլնելուց, մեռնելը լաւ է:
Death is better than disgrace.

Սաղը հաւին գրաւական չեն տար:
Don't pawn a goose for a hen.

Սատանէն ոչ մեռել ա, ոչ էլ մեռնելիք ունի:
The devil didn't die, nor will it die.

Սերը սոփորն ա կերել, թանը՝ մոլորը:
The cream for the user, the tan for the loser.*
 [i.e., People get from life according to their drive.]

Վազող ձիու գլխին չեն դարկի:

Don't hit a running horse on the head.

Վազող ջուրը կեղտ չի բռնէ:

Running waters don't get muddy.

Տատրակը որ բռն չինող ըլնէր, իր բռնը կը չինէր:

If the turtle-dove were a nest builder, it would build its own nest.

Տուն չինող կացինը դուրսը կը մնայ:

An axe that builds a house will be left outside.

[i.e., A hard worker is taken for granted.]

Ցերեկը ձութ կը ծամէ, գիշերը ձէթ կը վառէ:

In daytime he chews gum, at night he burns oil.

Փայ անողին փայ չմնաց:

The partitioner is left with no portion.

Փէշքաչ ձիու ատամները չեն նայի:

Never look a gift horse in the mouth.

Փուշը մէկ-մէկ կը հանեն:

Thorns are pulled out one-by-one.

Փուշը մտած տեղիցը կը հանեն:

They pull out a thorn from where it pricked.

Քաչալը որ դեղ անող ըլնի, իրա գլխին կ'անի:

If the bald man had a cure, he would use it for his head.

Քարի միջից ջուր հանող է:

He can squeeze water from a stone.

Քիչ դեւ կար ի դեւնոց, մէկն էլ իջաւ երդընուց:

As if there weren't enough devs in the devnots*, now one came down from the roof.*

Քոռ (կոյր) աչքից արցունք չի դափ:

A blind eye will not have tears.

Քունը քուն կը բերի:

Sleep makes you sleep.

Քունը որ չասեմ, ինչպէ՞ս այրեմ քեզ:

If I don't tell you your faults, how can I hurt you?

[Situational saying used in a quarrel with name-calling]

Օձը որ օձ ա, մարդի ջուր խմելիս չի խեթի:

Even a snake won't hurt someone who is drinking water.

Օձի ձագը չի սիրուիր:

You cannot love the snake's young.

Օձից էլ դեղ են շինում:

Even from a snake they make a drug.

Օտարի ձեռքով լաւ է փուչ քաղել:

It's easy to gather thorns with somebody else's hands.

Օրն որ չըլլայ, տարին չըլլար:

If there wasn't a day, there wouldn't be a year.

The Armenian Alphabet

(West Armenian Reading)

<i>Printed Letter</i>		<i>Name</i>	<i>Transliteration</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>
Ա	ա	ipe	[a]	as in ask
Բ	բ	pen	[p]	as in paper
Գ	գ	kim	[k]	as in kind
Դ	դ	ta	[t]	as in ten
Ե	ե	yetch	[ye],[e],[y] ¹	as in yes
Զ	զ	za	[z]	as in zest
Է	է	e	[ē]	as in else
Ը	ը	ə	[ə]	as in fur
Թ	թ	toe	[t]	as in ten
Ժ	ժ	zhe	[zh]	as in French 'je'
Ի	ի	enee	[i]	as in beer
Լ	լ	lewn	[l]	as in light
Խ	խ	khe	[kh]	as in German acht
Ծ	ծ	dza	[dz]	as in kids
Կ	կ	gen	[g]	as in go
Հ	հ	hoe	[h]	as in hot
Ձ	ձ	tsa	[ts]	as in lots
Ղ	ղ	ghad	[gh]	as the French r
Ճ	ճ	je	[dj]	as in jug
Մ	մ	men	[m]	as in mine
Յ	յ	he	[h] or [y] ²	as in her or in yes
Ն	ն	noo	[n]	as in nine
Շ	շ	sha	[sh]	as in shine
Ո	ո	vo	[vo] or [o] ³	as in vocal or in orbit
Չ	չ	cha	[ch]	as in chair
Պ	պ	be	[b]	as in bear
Ջ	ջ	che	[ch]	as in chair
Ռ	ր	ra	[r]	vibrating as in Russian

THE ARMENIAN ALPHABET

Ս	ս	se	[s]	as in say
Վ	վ	vev	[v]	as in vase
Տ	տ	duen	[d]	as in door
Ր	ր	re	[r]	as in right
Ծ	ց	tsoe	[ts]	as in lots
Ի	լ	yune	[v] ⁴	as in love
Փ	փ	pure	[p]	as in paper
Զ	զ	ke	[k]	as in kind
Օ	օ	o	[o]	as in all
Ֆ	ֆ	fe	[f]	as in file
<hr/>				
ՈՒ	ու	oo	[ou] ⁵	as in poor
ԵՆ	են, է	yev	[yev] ⁶	as in Nouriyev

Notes

1. In initial position of words, **Ե**, **է** is pronounced [ye] (**էս** [yes] "I"); before vowels other than [e], **է** is pronounced [y] (**էօթ** [yot] "seven"); in words between consonants, **է** is pronounced [e] (**մեր** [mer] "our"); in words before other vowels, **է** is pronounced [y] (**սենյակ** [senyag] "room" or as in the typical Armenian surname suffix **-եան** in **Սարգեան** [Saryan] "Sarian").
2. In initial position, **Ժ**, **յ** is pronounced [h] (**յուսակ** [housal] "to hope"); after vowels, **յ** is pronounced [y] (**նայիլ** [nayil] "to look"); in final position of words after vowels, **յ** is not pronounced (**արքայ** [arka] "king").
3. In initial position of words **Ո**, **ո** is pronounced [vo] (**ոճ** [vodj] "style"); within words, **ո** is pronounced [o] (**չորս** [chors] "four").
4. When used after **ա**, the letter **լ** is pronounced [v] (**լավ** [lav] "good"); **լ** appears also as constituent part of the graphic sign **ու** [ou] (**տուն** [doun] "house"); combined with **ի** as **իլ** it is pronounced either [you] (**լավույն** [lavoutyoun] "goodness") or [ü] (**սյուն** [sün] "pillar"). In final position of words **իլ** is pronounced [iv] (**թիլ** [tiv] "number").
5. **Ու**, **ու** [ou] and **Են**, **են** or **է** [yev] are not part of the Armenian alphabet. They represent combinations of letters as graphic signs for important sounds.
6. When used as an independent word with the meaning "and," **էն** [yev] is usually represented by the graphic sign **և**.

The Armenian Alphabet

(East Armenian Reading)

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THE ARMENIAN ALPHABET

Ս	<i>u</i>	se	[s]	as in say
Վ	<i>վ</i>	vev	[v]	as in vase
Տ	<i>տ</i>	tuen	[t']	as in batter
Ր	<i>ր</i>	re	[r]	as in right
Ծ	<i>ց</i>	tsoe	[ts']	as in cats
Խ	<i>լ</i>	yune	[v] ⁴	as in love
Փ	<i>փ</i>	pure	[p']	as in peach
Ք	<i>ք</i>	ke	[k']	as in cake
Օ	<i>օ</i>	o	[o]	as in all
Ֆ	<i>ֆ</i>	fe	[f]	as in file
<hr/>				
ՈՒ	<i>ու</i>	oo	[ou] ⁵	as in poor
ԵՒ	<i>ել, է</i>	yev	[yev] ⁶	as in Nouriyev

On differences between the reading of the Armenian Alphabet in the two versions of Armenian, West and East

As presented above, the readings of the Armenian alphabet in the two versions of Armenian, East and West, differ. Differences involve mainly the consonant system:

WESTERN READING

(1)	<i>ւ</i> [b]	<i>ղ</i> [g]	<i>տ</i> [d]	<i>ծ</i> [dz]	<i>ճ</i> [dj]
(2)	<i>բ, փ</i> [p]	<i>դ, ք</i> [k]	<i>դ, ր</i> [t]	<i>ձ, ց</i> [ts]	<i>ջ, շ</i> [ch]

EASTERN READING

(1)	<i>բ</i> [b]	<i>դ</i> [g]	<i>դ</i> [d]	<i>ձ</i> [dz]	<i>ջ</i> [dj]
(2)	<i>ւ</i> [p']	<i>ղ</i> [k']	<i>տ</i> [t']	<i>ծ</i> [ts']	<i>ճ</i> [ch']
(3)	<i>փ</i> [p']	<i>ք</i> [k']	<i>ր</i> [t']	<i>ց</i> [ts']	<i>շ</i> [ch']

These two distinct tables illustrate the following: West Armenian, as in all Indo-European languages, has a double system of voiced and voiceless consonants with the same articulation. East Armenian, however, has a triple system of related consonants. As is seen in this illustration, in the Eastern reading the voiceless consonants have two versions:

a) the explosive consonants (with the sign [']) which is a characteristic trait of Caucasian languages, particularly of Georgian; compare line (2) in the Eastern Reading of the consonant system.

b) the aspirated consonants (with the sign [']); compare line (3) in the Eastern Reading of the consonant system.

The Eastern reading of the Armenian alphabet corresponds phonetically to its pronunciation in Classical Armenian. Each of the graphic signs has here a distinct phonetic value which explains the number of letters in the Armenian alphabet, created by Mesrop Mashtots in A.D. 405. West Armenian, however, has deviated from its phonetic origins. As a result of historical developments, the phonetic distinctions for three parallel consonants have disappeared. A shift of voiceless consonants to voiced ones has occurred; compare line (1) below. Moreover, a merging of pairs of phonetically distinct sounds into a single sound has taken place. Hence the duplication of graphic signs for the same sound in the Western version of the alphabet; compare line (2) below.

(1) պ [p'] > [b] կ [k'] > [g] տ [t'] > [d] ծ [ts'] > [dz] ճ [ch'] > [dj]

բ [b]	գ [g]	դ [d]	ճ [dz]	ջ [dj]
(2) > [p]	> [k]	> [t]	> [ts]	> [ch]
փ [p']	ք [k']	թ [t']	ց [ts']	չ [ch']

Glossary

("W" = West Armenian, "E" = East Armenian)

Agha: originally a title of honor in Turkey; also a form of polite address; in colloquial Armenian, used for "master," "boss," "gentleman"

apoukht E / aboukhd W: cured meat, also called *basturma E / pasturma W* (Turkish)

aror: ancient predecessor of the գուտ [goutan E / koutan W], a plough made mostly from wood

ashkhor: abbreviation for աշխատանքային օր "working day," the payment unit in a collective farm, or *kolkhoz* (q.v.), in the former Soviet Union

Ayb E / Ayp W: name of the first letter in the Armenian alphabet **bakht E / pakht W**: "fate," "destiny," "luck"

banir see *panir*

bantoukhd see *pandoukht*

Barekendan E / Paregentan W: 1. carnival, originally a pagan festival, adapted to Christianity; 2. the week before Lent, marked by celebrations, eating and drinking, games, competitions, etc.

bekmez E / pekmez W: grape juice condensed to a thick sirup, similar to honey

boulgour: processed wheat (boiled, dried, and cracked)

chat E / djat W: millet bread, a very rough variety of bread, eaten in the past by poor peasants and slaves

cheer: dried fruit: mostly raisins, dried apricots, peaches and prunes

dadjig see *tachik*

dakr see *tagr*

dal see *tal*

dev E / tev W: an imaginary figure in Armenian folk belief: a giant demon who lives in the mountains far away from people and behaves like a brigand

dévnots E / tevnots W: a place where *devs* (q.v.) live

djat see *chat*

- dmak E / tmag W**: the tail of a species of sheep commonly found in Armenia; the *dmak E / tmag W* is very large and consists entirely of fat
- dolma** see *tolma*
- dzavar E / tsavar W**: the Armenian equivalent of *boulgour* (q.v.)
- florin(s)**: ancient gold coin(s)
- gata E / kata W**: short pastry with a sweet filling made of butter, sugar, and flour
- gharib E / gharip W**: Armenian expatriate forced by financial hardship and/or political strife to leave the homeland and live abroad
- glorig** see *kololik*
- Hadji**: title given to a person after a pilgrimage to Jerusalem
- halva**: 1. Armenian dessert prepared from a mixture of browned flour or semolina, butter, sugar or honey, and water; 2. Oriental dessert prepared from tahini (sesame seed paste), sugar or honey, and possibly nuts
- harissa**: a festive meal consisting of well-cooked meat (lamb or poultry) blended into a porridge of boiled wheat. It is served with melted butter.
- ishkhan**: the trout of Sevan Lake, known as the prince of trout, hence its name *ishkhan* "prince"; its special taste is attributed to the very cold water of Lake Sevan (2,000 meters above sea level) and to minerals from mountain springs
- kachk**: in Armenian mythology, an evil male ghost of human origin who tortures humans and animals at every opportunity
- kamancha**: Armenian string instrument, also found in Transcaucasia, Iran and other neighboring countries
- kebob**: grilled chunks of ground meat
- kenakal E / kenegal W**: a brother-in-law, the husband of a *keni* (q.v.)
- keni**: a sister-in-law, the wife's sister
- khash**: hearty soup prepared from cow hooves and/or tripe; also called *pacha* (q.v.)
- khashil**: light soup prepared from flour and yogurt or water
- khavits E / khavidz W**: an Armenian dessert-porridge consisting of fried flour, butter, sugar, and water or milk
- kipilik**: night villain in Armenian mythology
- khrovats E / khrovadz W**: grilled meat, usually lamb
- kismet**: "share of luck"
- kolkhoz**: abbreviation of "collective farm" in the former Soviet Union
- kololak E / gololag W** (also: *kololik E / glorig W* etc.): walnut-sized meatballs, consisting of ground meat, rice, onion and herbs

GLOSSARY

- korkot E / gorgod W:** cracked wheat
- koufta:** huge meatballs (the size of coconuts), consisting of pounded meat, milk and butter
- koulak E / goulag W:** wealthy farmer in pre-Soviet times, known for exploiting poor peasants
- lavash** (hats): a long, very thin oval-shaped wheat bread baked normally in a *toneer* (q.v.)
- maj:** the helm of the *aror* (q.v.)
- mashtots:** the book of Armenian ecclesiastic rituals and prayers for various occasions: named after Mesrob Mashtots, the inventor of the Armenian Alphabet (A.D. 405) and translator of the Bible
- matagh E / madagh W:** a sacrifice promised to God or saints in return for the fulfillment of a wish; also an offering to commemorate deceased relatives
- matsoun E / madzoun W:** Armenian variety of yogurt
- motal:** cottage cheese mixed with herbs, particularly thyme, aged in a ceramic jug or in a lamb or goat skin sack
- mullah:** honorary title for an Islamic scholar
- ner:** a sister-in-law, the wife of a *tagr E / dakr W* (q.v.)
- odjakh:** traditional fireplace or hearth; symbolizes the home, the household, the family, or generation
- pacha:** Turkish word for *hash* (q.v.)
- pakht** see *bakht*
- pandoukht E / bantoukhd W** see *gharib E / gharip W*
- panir E / banir W:** the most basic white cheese, similar to feta cheese
- papa:** porridge-like soup consisting of cracked grain and milk or yogurt
- piaster:** ancient monetary unit
- pilaf or plaf:** rice cooked with water, salt and butter and/or broth
- pllör E / bllör W:** meat-rolls consisting of minced meat rolled in vine or cabbage leaves
- pout:** weight unit (16 kg.)
- Saint Sarkis:** a popular saint in Armenia
- samovar:** Russian-made teaboiler
- sanahayr:** the father of their godchild; used by godparents
- sanamayr:** the mother of their godchild; used by godparents
- sand:** a round bowl of wood, stone or metal in which grain, salt or sugar is ground
- saz:** Armenian string instrument, also found in the Near East; known for its

serene and subdued sound

Sultan: an Islamic sovereign, used in proverbs to indicate wealth and power

tachik E / dadjig W: a name for the Persian, Arab, Turkish, or other foreign exploiter

tagr E / dakr W: brother-in-law, the husband's brother

tal E / dal W: sister-in-law, the husband's sister

tan: a common drink or cold soup consisting of water and yogurt

tmag see **dmak**

toneer: conical fire pit built from **touf** (q.v.); used in baking *lavash* bread (q.v.) and meat dishes; typically found in rural Armenian households

tolma E / dolma W: Turkish name for **pllor E / bllor W** (q.v.)

touf E / douf W: a light volcanic stone used as the main construction material in Armenian architecture

tsavar see **dzavar**

varsang: a wooden shaft used to crack grain, salt, and sugar in the *sand* (q.v.)

Vezir: the next in rank after the **Sultan** (q.v.) in an Islamic government

vishap: figure in Armenian mythology often portrayed as a dragon or a giant serpent

Zatik E / Zadig W: *Easter*

zhazhik: 1. drained yogurt or cottage cheese; 2. yogurt mixed with cucumber

zouina: Armenian wind instrument, known for its shrill and penetrating sound.

Notes

1. There exists a small number of Armenian-English proverb anthologies. The oldest of these is that of Rd. Bayan at the Armenian Monastery of S. Lazarus (1907) which includes 200 units. Smaller proverb collections, published recently in the U.S., are for the most part aimed at American-Armenian families. While they are of practical use, none of these collections is accompanied by a scholarly introduction.
2. From Greek, *παροιμία* proverb" and *λογία* study" = "study of proverbs."
3. "... im Volke umlaufende, in sich geschlossene Sprüche von lehrhafter Tendenz und gehobener Form" (Seiler 1922:2).
4. All English translations of the Armenian proverbs in this book are my own.
5. As a consequence of historical events, the Armenian people have been divided geographically and linguistically into two communities, the East and the West. Accordingly, as a literary language Armenian exists in two versions: East Armenian and West Armenian. The East Armenian version is the official language of the State of Armenia, as well as the language of Armenians living in Iran. The West Armenian version is the language of the majority of the Armenian diaspora throughout the Middle East, Europe, America and Australia. Each version of the language has produced a rich literature accessible to both communities. Differences between the two versions manifest themselves particularly in pronunciation, and, to some extent, also in grammar and vocabulary. These differences, however, do not greatly hinder communication between those of different backgrounds. Nevertheless, because of this linguistic and sociocultural division, it is often difficult for the isolated child of the diaspora to understand and appreciate all the messages which proverbs convey. At times, East Armenian terms and particularly regionalisms can make no sense to the West Armenian reader. The introductory study of this book (pp. 13-168), the commentaries in the anthology, and the glossary (pp. 473-476) were written with these difficulties in mind.
6. Compare Ghanalanian's spelling *դարձ* [*dard*] for "worry" (Ghanalanian:1960).
7. Whatever the cause—modern technology, corporate and political language, streamlined verbal expression, a change in values—one cannot help but notice

with regret that the use of proverbs is today in decline, everywhere, and particularly on the North American continent.

8. Throughout the years, proverbs in various languages have captivated my attention. "Archaisms in German Proverbs" was the title of my master's thesis. Later, I was for a number of years intensely involved in the preparation (in collaboration with K. Aghayekian) of a German-Armenian proverb lexicon, a project which had to be abandoned on the eve of completion because of my departure from Soviet Armenia. Many years later, in 1988, the lexicon was published with two new co-authors and substantial modifications, one of which was the unfortunate stylization of the Armenian proverbs and with it the loss of all dialectisms. Another modification was the omission of my name in accordance with Soviet censorship rules, which up to 1988 deprived expatriate authors from authorship (see Aghayekian et al.:1988).

9. Some proverbs are still circulating in their classical Armenian forms. When the importance of self-examination has to be stressed, Armenians say: *Ծախի՛ր զքեզ*. Compare the Greek equivalent of this Platonian saying: *Γνωθὲι σεαυτόν* and the Latin one: *Nosce te ipsum* — "Know thyself."

10. The discussion of archaic forms, as well as historical names of people and places in Armenian proverbs would lead us beyond the scope of this introduction. In any case, proverbs with geographic names defy translation since they refer to very specific socio-cultural details, inaccessible to the foreigner. Therefore, I have kept them to a minimum in this collection.

11. According to Dupriez, questions and exclamations can be interchangeable. "The limits between questions and exclamations are not always clear; it is sometimes possible to substitute one for the other without harming the overall meaning" (Dupriez 1991:179). This observation holds true for Armenian.

12. Note that the grammatical peculiarities in Armenian proverb formulas are not necessarily reflected in my English translations.

13. On "ungrammatical" proverbs which cannot be generated as normal sentences by a regular grammar of a language, see Norrick (1985).

14. Obviously, this study reflects ideas and concepts on Armenian nominalizations developed in my earlier works (see Sakayan:1986, 1990a, 1990b and 1992).

15. As Kokare (1978:25) notes, proverbs can be in some languages pithier than in others, and Armenian proves this view.

16. Compare the discussion on "pithiness" in proverbs as presented in Norrick (1985:36).

17. The distinction between figurative and literal is, as Seiler observes, more a matter of degree than an absolute dichotomy (1922:4). Some proverbs make use of both literal and figurative components where one or the other component can prevail.
18. "The same message can be conveyed by different images" (Dundes 1975:105).
19. The personal pronoun "it" is used to distinguish inanimate objects.
20. *Armenian Soviet Encyclopedia*, vol. 3. 1977 (Yerevan: Armenian Academy Press, 1977).
21. Note the combination of near-rhyme and alliteration in the use of these two words: *dmak / danak*.
22. The noun Տէր [der W / ter E] with its many equivalents in English (compare "Lord," "God," "master," "owner," "boss," etc., also metaphorically "protector," "guardian," "caretaker," "custodian," "trustee," "supporter," "beholder," etc.) is a high-frequency component in Armenian proverbs. This noun has been problematic throughout the translation of proverbs in this work.
23. Among all genres in folklore the proverb is known to be the most ambiguous. This is due to its pithiness as well as to its metaphoric presentation allowing manifold interpretations (Krikmann 1975:17; Kokare 1978:26).
24. Cited from Jakobson's *Works on Poetics* in Russian translation (1987).
25. Compare analogous discussions with regard to Russian folkloric poetry in Shapiro (1976:149).
26. Due to restrictions of stylistic nature in English, the singular of the original շոր "dress" had to be replaced by the plural "clothes" in the translation.
27. Due to the absence of an equivalent word in English, *bundle* has been chosen to render the meaning of the word պողպատ, a square cloth in which clothing was carefully folded and stored.
28. Mieder identifies the proverb "It takes two to tango" as of American coinage (Mieder 1993:175).
29. I have found the book by M. Goldman, *Proverbs of the Sages, a Collection of Proverbs, Ethical Precepts from Talmud and Midrashim* (1916), most helpful.
30. This proverb found its way into Armenia via the translation of Stalin's address to the Soviet people in 1941 after the Germans' sudden attack on the Soviet Union. Promising victory, he ended his address with these words.
31. Azerbaidjanian is a Turkic language which is very close to Turkish. For centuries under Turkish rule, many Armenians were able to communicate with Azerbaidjanis.

32. If I am permitted a personal aside: as a teenager I was impressed by the fact that my grandfather's letters to my father were written in Turkish but with Armenian characters. When I asked my father why this was so, he replied: "This is because of the sad history of our people."

33. There are many instances of Turkish-language texts printed with Armenian script. Worth mentioning among them are the newspapers *Manzume-i Efkâr* (Կարծիքներու շարք) [Series of Opinions] (1866-1917), *Tercüman-ı Efkâr* (Կարծիքներու թարգման) [Interpreter of Opinions] (1877-1884) and *Cerideyi Şarkıye* (Արեւելեան Օրագիր) [Oriental Daily] (1885-1913).

34. The term "macaronic" originally (since the 17th century) referred to a vernacular verse or rhyme which included Latin elements. This term applies now to a native text containing elements of any other language as well.

35. See the curious anonymous edition of *Turkish Proverbs Translated into English*, printed in 1907 at the Armenian Monastery of S. Lazarus in Venice, where the Turkish text of 190 proverbs is written with Armenian characters.

36. It is beyond the scope of the present work to discuss the etymology of culinary terminology in depth.

37. I would like to explain briefly how I came upon the topic "Armenian folk beliefs in proverbial expression." About 25 years ago, I was requested by the Institute of Literature of the Armenian Academy of Sciences to translate M. Abeghian's doctoral thesis *Der Armenische Volksglaube* [Armenian Folk Beliefs] from German into Armenian. The thesis was written during the years 1895-1898 in Jena, Leipzig, Berlin, and Paris, and defended in Jena where it was recommended for publication by Professor of Armenology Heinrich Gelzer. It then appeared in 1899 under the title *Der Armenische Volksglaube. Inaugurale Dissertation der hohen philosophischen Fakultät der Universität Jena, zur Erlangung der Doktorwürde, vorgelegt von Manuk Abeghian aus Astapat* (Leipzig: Druck von W. Drugulin, 1899). The printed book is dedicated to the philanthropist Alexander Manthashian, with the words: *Herrn Alexander Manthaschian in treuer Dankbarkeit gewidmet*. In 1975, the original text of this thesis and its translation by me appeared in the 7 (7th) volume of Abeghian's complete works, published by the Armenian Academy Press. At the time of this fascinating project, I did not realize to what extent it would influence my future work. Years later, when I started getting involved with the linguistic aspects of Armenian folklore, and particularly Armenian paremiology, I intuitively began drawing parallels between Abeghian's exposition of Armenian folk beliefs, as reflected in folk tales, incantations, charms and spells, and my own object of

interest, the Armenian proverb. This explains why the present section draws considerably on Abeghian's account.

38. Abeghian's work *Der armenische Volksglaube*, will be referred to according to the new pagination in the Armenian translation published in 1975.

39. There are of course many other Armenian proverbs cynical in nature and contradictory to the ethical precepts of Christianity, as will be seen on some of the following pages.

40. This is one of the two proverbs which Abeghian discusses in his work *Der armenische Volksglaube* (1975).

41. Referring to their deceased relatives, Armenians even today call them *լուսաՀոգի* "bright-souls."

42. In some Armenian dialects the verb *թաթախուել* refers to the termination of the fasting period, which presupposes great feasting.

43. Abeghian mentions, among other night villains, the *խալիլիկ* [*khpilik*] (1975:35); the word in the proverb contains a third *ի*: *խիլիլիկ* [*kipilik*].

44. *Սլիկ* "Slik" is an abbreviated form of *Սիլվանոս* *Sylvanos*, a shadowy figure from Armenian history. The legend has it that he was a priest who came to be denounced as the Antichrist (Ghanalanian 1960:XVI).

45. Compare in Zoroastrian scripture the invocation to fire, calling upon it not to go out (Dawson 1931:42).

46. *Թոնիր* [*toneer*], an old loan-word from Iranian (Hübschmann 1897:155), but of Semitic provenance (Adjarian 1971; Djahoukian 1987), has lost all trace of its foreign origin and is perceived as a proper Armenian word. The more recent borrowing from Turkish *odjak* [*odjakh*], is still perceived by the educated Armenian as a Turkish word (Abeghian 1975:14).

47. Compare the affront *գրողը տանի* or *գրողը քեզ Հետ* which corresponds to the English "the hell with it" or "the hell with you."

48. Belief in the evil eye as a superstition or as an occult phenomenon flourishes in many different parts of the world. See the several views on the history and contemporary meaning of the evil eye in Maloney (1976).

49. Compare the experiment and the statistical data resulting from it in Albigh (1931).

50. While in the Western version of Armenian the word *bar;kam* means "friend," in the Eastern version it also means "relative."

51. Pilgrimage to Jerusalem was the ideal of any Christian Armenian.

52. Beside the meaning "to listen," the phrase *մտիկ տալ* in the Western version of Armenian means also "to watch," "to look."

53. In Aghayan's Armenian Dictionary (1976), printed in the reformed Armenian orthography of the Soviet period, the word **վեր** is presented with two oppositional meanings, namely as the homonyms a) **վեր** "up," and b) **վեր** "down"; the latter **վեր** represents an East-Armenian regional version of the original form **վար** or the West-Armenian version of **վար** for "down." However, the classical orthography of Armenian has allowed to distinguish the two meanings also in their spelling: **վեր** for "up" and **վհր** for "down."

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